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THE

STAFF OFFICER;

OR,

THE SOLDIER OF FORTUNE.

A TALE OF REAL LIFE.

BY OLIVER MOORE.

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The web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together. Our virtues would be proud if our faults whipped them not; and our crimes would despair if they were not cherished by our virtues.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

There 's matter in these sighs—these profound heaves, you must translate.

As soon as we got into blue water, and my head became a little righted, my eyes being no longer tantalised by the sight of that shore which it was probable I might never see again, I devoted some hours each day to reading. Besides the usual number of nautical books, our commander boasted of a tolerable little library of amusing works.

It is somewhere said that no man ought to undertake a long voyage without having Roderick Random to while away the heavy hours. The

captain had not limited himself to that one production of the coarse but ever-entertaining Smollett, but had provided himself with many works of that and of other popular authors.

Fielding's Tom Jones, by its evident wear and tear, was proved to have been a general favorite; and here it was that I first found time or taste to read that inimitably well-wrought story of the generous but erring Jones, and his lovely Sophia; some of the scenes in which reminded me of my own follies.

Besides these standard works, which, as faithful sketches of human nature in every age, will never be entirely out of fashion, the bookcase was furnished with Annual Registers, Magazines, and other periodicals of the time.

During my porings over a volume of the former for 1794, I fell upon a paragraph which caused such a sudden perturbation in my whole appearance, as to excite the curiosity of the surgeon, who was present. I read the article over and over again, during which my agitation rather increased than diminished. "What can be the matter?" demanded the man of medicine; to which I could only reply, with a sigh, "O! 'tis a long story;

I 'll tell it to you to-night; meanwhile I 'll take a glass of wine and a walk." Fortified with this cordial, I took a turn on deck; and on my return once more read the startling paragraph, as follows:—

"Gibraltar—October. Accounts have lately been received here that the noted Irish highwayman Cusack, who was taken on board L'Espiègle French privateer this time twelve months, after an action of two hours, by H. M. S. Scorpion, and whose escape last December from the prison-ship in this Bay, when doubly ironed, excited such general astonishment, was seen by a serjeant of marines not many weeks since in Ireland, in the disguise of a travelling tinker, accompanied by the daughter of the old Gitana *Ruth*, who keeps the wine-shop on the neutral ground, and who it was discovered passed over, the same night on which Cusack escaped, to Algesiras in sailor's apparel. A reward of one hundred pounds had been offered by the magistrates of the counties Down and Tyrone for the apprehension of this famous robber.

"The girl by whom he was accompanied is known to be the daughter of a discharged Irish soldier,

who settled in this part of Andalusia some twenty years since, and married the woman who has succeeded him as keeper of one of the wine-houses, those haunts of low dissipation, which are found to be so productive of crime and insubordination in this garrison. The unfortunate victim of the villain's arts first became known to him, it is supposed, during some of his smuggling excursions in this neighbourhood.

"We hope in our next to give an account of the sacrifice of this daring criminal to the offended laws of society.

"The other Irishman, named Kelly, a deserter from the artillery, who acted as an officer on board L'Espiègle, and who was so severely wounded during the action, died a few months since in the Naval Hospital, without making any disclosure whatever as to the means of escape, or the probable retreat of his late guilty companion."

Here then the history of my mysterious recruit and his lovely, lost associate was cleared up! Well might he have looked daggers at poor drunken Husho when he sung "*O tinker! O tinker! you are the* VERY MAN!" unconscious that it sounded to the ears of the tinker as the knell of his fate,

knowing as he did that a price had been set on his blood. Well might he have appeared horror-struck when the major mentioned the word GIBRALTAR! as he stood before the triumvirate, who were sitting in judgment upon him at Longueville barracks.

Ever prompt to plead even for the errors of woman, I asked myself what offence had poor Ruth committed. Nurtured perhaps in scenes of profligacy, familiarised with crime, she had followed the fortunes of a bold and daring adventurer, whom she "*loved not wisely, but too well!*" I could not then join in the sanguine hopes and anticipations of the Gibraltar editor, as to the ultimate fate of the unfortunate man, known to me only as poor Rafferty the tinker!

I had heard and read some strange stories, and even songs, of "*Cusack, the bold young highwayman of the north,*" all partaking of the marvellous and romantic; but I had never heard of any particular outrage, much less murder, having been committed by him. As nearly as I could recollect, the reports of his depredations were of that attractive cast which are too generally admired amidst the lawless youth of a half-civilised

peasantry; his robberies were committed under various disguises, and generally on those to whom his person was most familiarly known.

Agreeably to my promise, I amused my messmates in the course of the evening, by giving a short history of the characters alluded to in the article, which excited such strong feelings in me. They all blamed my want of forethought, and indeed hinted at a lack of zeal for the service in not returning to the barracks after my midnight adventure with the tinker's wife, to give the alarm, notwithstanding my confidence that the recruit had been secured seemingly beyond human power of escape: but none of these gentlemen had seen the poor devoted Ruth! My conscience never smote me with a sense of guilty connivance, and even then my rebel heart rejoiced at his escape; not for his sake, poor wretch! but for the sake of her who had for ever linked her fate to his! For several days my mind dwelt on this subject, and it required new scenes to drive it wholly from my thoughts.

We made the island of Madeira early on the seventh day. A signal was made for the convoy to heave to; while one of the frigates, making all

sail, stretched in towards shore, and did not rejoin us until late in the afternoon.

I was sick to death the whole of the day, and heartily glad when the signal to bear away enabled me to enjoy my long-deferred dinner. For two days more we were favored with delightful weather, and looked forward with confident hopes that these favorable winds would carry us into the trades with a clear deck and a flowing sheet.

CHAPTER II.

He now lay sick and speechless on his pillow,
And, rocking in his hammock, long'd for land.

But the change of moon brought a change of wind and weather. Before sunset of the tenth day the lofty top-gallant-yards took their humbler station on the booms, and we were scarcely able to carry reefed courses during this squally night. The morning's light presented a scattered fleet, a stormy sky, and cross-tumbling sea, which sadly discomposed the neat order of our breakfast-table. My sea legs completely failed me; and I now held on by clinging to the capstan, with aching head, discontented heart, and by no means very composed stomach.

Meanwhile the weather thickened on all sides;

a fitful gleam of sunshine would now and then break in lurid flashes through the murky clouds, like the smiles of demons mocking our toiling barks in their contest with the fretful waves. We now lay five points from our course, close hauled; and top-gallant-mast struck in all the fleet. When dinner was announced, sea-sickness had laid me helpless in my berth, alike insensible and indifferent to good or ill.

The signal-gun to tack was fired at eight. The night was, as I heard the commander remark, pitch-dark, wet, and squally: we were close in the wake of the commodore. My first broken slumbers of the night were disturbed by the cry of "*Helm's-a-lee!*" and I was in an agony from the noise and bustle on deck, the pitching of the ship in stays, the rattling of rigging, and creaking of bulkheads; until the last cry of "*Haul-ov-all!*" when the vessel, lying down on her fresh tack, assumed a decided position in the water.

For the preceding four hours I had been to leeward. My berth was now to windward; and in the disturbed state of my head and nerves, I expected nothing less than to be pitched out on the floor of my cabin. With this miserable

feeling I could not close my eyes. The laboring vessel ploughed her rugged way, while the various noises above and below rendered this to me a hideous night. Shortly after twelve, while in a state of doubtful somnolency, my ears were struck with the sound of the signal-gun to tack; and immediately after a short and horrid shriek roused me from my pillow.

I involuntarily started up; but in the effort struck my forehead with such violence against the beam above me, as to throw me back senseless and bleeding on my mattress. How long I remained unnoticed I know not; but when I recovered the first shock, I perceived the commander and the surgeon with a lantern in hand by my berthside, attracted by my groans, to whom I recounted as well as I was able the cause of my mishap, attributing it to what I then imagined a horrid dream; but, alas! it was a sad reality. The men on deck and the officers below had heard the dismal sound; and not a doubt remained but that some dire calamity had befallen some of our convoy.

The next morning the weather proved more moderate, but the wind was foul and baffling;

but we still held a good station close on the quarter of our commodore. In the course of his observations amongst the fleet, the agent perceived one of the transports to be missing, and as each had its distinguishing vane, with its name and number of troops entered in his book, he was at no loss to name the missing vessel; and on referring to the returns, I perceived with sorrow that TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-THREE MEN AND ELEVEN OFFICERS had embarked on board that ill-fated ship!

We heard nothing of the particulars of this calamity until we reached Barbadoes. According to the log-book of the man-of-war it appeared that in tacking a transport had run aboard the commodore, and (as it was supposed) FOUNDERED!

The officers of the watch laid the entire blame upon the crew of the transport; but dead men tell no tales: the voice which could have told the truth, was for ever "hushed in the bosom of the black abyss;" but its last dismal shriek still rings in my ear.

I suffered so much pain from the injury my head received from that violent concussion, as to be incapable of reading or taking my accustomed

exercise for some days; but the return of fine weather and smooth water tempted me, at the end of a week's confinement, once more on deck. The sailors were making preparations for enacting that farce usually performed on crossing The Line, a thing which tells very well to landsmen on *paper*, but is in reality a sad silly piece of buffoonery, even when the most strained exertions are made to give it effect.

The only passengers to be operated on in our ship were the two store-keepers, myself, and, I believe, half a dozen of the younger sailors. The *sport* of the thing, which could only be deemed sport by some speculating spinsters on Neptune's high-road to Hindostan and a husband, (to whom the sight of a tarry seaman, almost in a state of nudity, must be a novelty,) was entirely confined to the forecastle, the fresh-watermen aft having bought off the penalty of ducking and shaving with three bottles of rum.

I had every reason to be satisfied with the doctor's kind attention to me; for, as he afterwards informed me, he considered my accident likely to prove more serious than I was myself aware of. He now, however, allowed me to

drink my usual moderate quantum of wine, and to amuse myself with books. The difference of climate soon became apparent, and day after day we cast off our *cloth*, and adopted the lighter garments. The Jacks had all donned their canvass vests, their straw-hats, and cast off their shoes and stockings. The awning was stretched over the quarter-deck, and the wind-sails were rigged at the main and fore-hatchway. The light summer-sails (the multifarious patches on which gave signs of ancient service) were bent to the yards, and the studding-sails rigged out on both sides.

Our voyage henceforth became a party of pleasure; there were a few dull sailers in the fleet, for the coming up of which we were occasionally obliged to shorten sail; but, with this drawback, our fleet met with no interruption.

I sometimes amused myself with trying to strike the dolphin with the grains; but all my attempts failed. The silvery flying-fish in small shoals, winging their short and sparkling flight close by our ship, was always an object of pleasing contemplation; they are frequently found entangled in the rigging of vessels. About the

thirtieth day from the Land's End the commodore gave the signal that he had *made* the land; that is to say, by his *reckoning*, not by sight. This set our master and the lieutenant to work, the result of whose joint calculations was, that we were yet *three hundred* miles from Barbadoes!

In accordance, however, with orders, although we carried on all day under *cracking* booms, every evening sail was reduced, and the usual signal for "*The convoy to close round the commodore, and carefully observe his movements during the ensuing night,*" was most strictly attended to.

On the thirty-second morning, the lad at the foretop-gallant-mast shouted out "*Land, ho! land, ho! right a-head!*" And the mate, who instantly ran aloft to ascertain that point, corroborated the intelligence by saying that he saw the "*cobbler lathering his chin,*"—an expression, the meaning of which I did not comprehend until about two hours after, when we came in full view of the long reef of rocks called the "*Cobblers,*" covered with its eternal snowy foam of breakers; far behind which lay the beautiful land of Barbadoes, glittering with luxuriant verdure.

One of the frigates "*stepped out*," (as the sailors said,) under a cloud of canvass; and the only two ships that still hung a-stern were taken in tow by the sixty-four and the other frigate, in order to gain our anchorage in Bridgetown Bay before sunset; and which we happily accomplished.

Here we found upwards of two hundred sail of shipping, (many of them in a shattered condition,) and the greater part of which had been buffeting about the channel for the preceding three months; as many more had been despatched to the various islands to leeward with reinforcements. We had scarcely dropped anchor, when we were boarded by a *press-gang*, and not less than eight of our prime seamen borne off in five minutes! We learnt that our affairs in that quarter of the globe, as regarded warlike operations, were in rather a flourishing condition.

As soon as possible, after coming to anchor, I dressed, and hastened to wait on my general on board the frigate. I found him, to my extreme regret, but just recovering from a severe fever, with which he had been attacked fourteen days before, and preparations were then making for taking him on shore in a cot. He received me

with great kindness, and while deploring his own infirm state, he remarked on my altered looks. I explained my accident to him, and accounted for the visible change in me by that circumstance, which I affected to make light of; but still more by the cutting off my hair quite close, which entirely changed my looks.

"*Ay, surely, surely!*" said my poor general, whose subdued spirits and faded form inspired me with feelings of pity, and the strongest attachment to himself, and solicitude for his recovery.

Every preparation was made for sending him to St. Anne's, when a dispatch-boat arrived with orders for the foreign brigade to proceed forthwith to Martinique; which induced him to alter his plans, as we were to sail for that island next morning. Although reluctant to leave my chief, I was strongly tempted to pay a visit to the town. There was still an hour and more to sunset. As my eyes wandered along the bright beach, fringed with verdant savannahs and nodding cocoa-nut trees, I viewed the novel scene with a mixture of dread and curiosity. In that very island (hitherto counted one of the most healthy) upwards of two thousand British of all ranks had

been swept off the preceding season by disease! whose place had now been supplied by as many fresh victims.

My visit to the shore, however, no longer depended on my own inclinations; for, on the return of the brigade-major, I was ordered to repair to the deputy adjutant-general's office with a variety of papers, while daylight permitted. The cutter was manned; and two young lieutenants, dressed for the shore, who were anxious and successful candidates for leave until the first watch, were my guides and companions.

CHAPTER III.

In the whole course of my life I never met a female, from the flat-nosed ebony-colored monster of the Tropics to the snow-white, sublime divinity of a Greek Isle, without a touch of romance.

I HAD a long distance to walk to the adjutant-general's office; and the exhaustion I experienced after the first quarter of an hour first awakened me to the powerfully enervating effects of the climate. My business concluded, I betook myself to the head tavern, in which I could scarcely find room to seat myself.

The celebrated Barbadian beauty Nancy Clarke was then, and for many years subsequently, the inviting hostess. She sat, as she has been represented in all her pictures, under the viranda of her house, on a low rush-bottomed chair; and the

superficial capacity of seat was adapted to the size of its enormous occupant. She was as beautiful as a skin like polished ebony, flat nose, wide mouth, teeth of ivory, woolly head, and, at least, TWENTY STONE of firm flesh, could make her.

There she sat, bawling out her orders to male and female attendants in the very highest pitch of the true *Barbadian nasal twang*, every now and then returning the compliments of some former acquaintance among the newly arrived with a smile, which any one, who (like me) had no taste for black beauty, might be cruel enough to call a *grin*.

On being introduced to this queen of the dark fair, who seemed to demand universal homage, she gave me her hand; and while holding mine, she asked me, "How you come by dat cole hand?" On my saying that I had almost run to and from Government House, and now felt a little chilled, she shook her immense head and chops, and with a kind squeeze of the hand, which she still held, said, "Ah, you young chap, tink you can do any ting in West Indy; take some Sangree, dear boy, an lie down in you bed." I did not feel altogether well, I confess, and her observations made me a

little nervous; however, I entered the public room, and amidst a noisy crowd, under a rolling volume of smoke, could hear Jack Gun's well-remembered voice. Nor was I long lost to his recognition: his last month's good living had absolutely stretched him out to such dimensions, that I should with difficulty have known him: he had also suffered his whiskers to grow to that immoderate length and breadth, which procured him the name of the "owl in the ivy-bush;" but in these halcyon days of dandyism he might have passed unnoticed—*then*, he was a monster.

It was in the house of the famous Nancy Clarke this poor fellow gave me with his own lips (perfectly unconscious that he was the herald of his own mean manœuvres) a full account of the success of his sponge on his youthful party, by his self-election to the presidency of the young gentlemen's mess; concluding (with an oath) "*that it was a capital* RUSIUS DE GUERRIUS, as we used to say in Guernsey, *haw! haw! haw!*"

Viewing his increasing corpulency and contempt for weak potations, I, in my mind, gave poor Jack six months' life; but *two* months—two little months—cut short the thread of his ex-

istence, and his bones lie amongst those of the now-forgotten thousands who lived their little day, and perished in these pestilential regions.

The fair-faced innocent boy Leslie now approached me, on my departure; and as I pressed the soft taper hand he offered, I could not help wishing he had never left the Highland halls of his noble father to encounter this rude and dangerous life; but I rejoiced to hear that his regiment, or rather what remained of it, after the ravages it had suffered the preceding season, had been drafted, the skeleton being under orders for England. My pleasure was increased by hearing that its "*precious remains*" (the then cant term for those spectral representatives of regiments aptly called "Skeletons") were probably, by that time, at Martinique, waiting to embark in the transports last arrived.

I hurried on board the frigate, and, after a short interview with the general, stepped into the agent's boat, which was in waiting for me. Fortunately I found myself nothing the worse in the morning for my indiscreet race against time the preceding evening. I rose with the colours, as

active, and with quite as good an appetite as ever I felt in England.

The first part of the morning was delicious; the sea-breeze came gently stealing from the ocean in soft and feeble flaws; but as the great ruler of the day gave tokens of his strength, it freshened until the whole surface of the bay glittered in fleecy whiteness.

The vessels under orders for Martinique and the islands to leeward were all under weigh by noon; and ours being the last to unmoor, I had a view of the whole as they passed. While standing at the gangway with my telescope, I spied my old captain the stammerer, waving his hat to me, as he and another officer (whom I supposed to be the spoiled child) stood on the poop of a passing vessel. I instantly caught the signal, and cheered them lustily, as long as they were within reach of the speaking trumpet's noisy throat.

The poor stammerer was butchered some few years after in the mutiny of a party belonging to a certain West India regiment, into which he had been promoted, and with which he was unfortunately detached from head-quarters. His violence

of temper, and that infirmity of speech which rendered him so irritable upon the slightest causes, probably made him peculiarly obnoxious to the mutineers.

I often reflected how extremely injudicious it was in the commander-in-chief to render the negro regiments a species of condemned service. By bestowing the commissions on men of long experience, temper, patience, and ability, their exertions might have reduced the wild untutored African, fresh from the coast, not only to the habits of civilised life, but to all the strict discipline of military subordination; instead of which these regiments were, in too many instances, made the refuge of those whose embarrassments, intemperance, or misconduct, had rendered their continuance in the old regiments of the line objectionable. Not but that there were many, very many, officers in those regiments whose professional talent, general intelligence, and highly honorable conduct, would have done credit to any corps; but that there were too many at that period of the exceptionable class thrust into those corps, to the great mortification of many honorable men, must be known to every old soldier.

Should the above observations meet the eye of any officer whose lot it was to graduate in one of the *black regiments*, he will pardon its severity, while he admits its justice, and accept an assurance that it is not intended as a general reflection on the above body. I am convinced that had the plan of forming black regiments been followed up with a prudential regard to the mind, habits, and local circumstances of the "*animal materiel*," a sufficient force would in a few years (previously to the abolition of the slave-trade) have been raised to render the service of white troops in the West Indies, if not wholly unnecessary, at least less so, in the proportion of one to five of the numbers of regiments that are still doomed to encounter such a destructive service.

But the maturing of the original plan was deferred from season to season: meanwhile a vile system of *negro-jobbing* crept in, which eventually overturned it.

The two West India regiments which still exist were, in a few years, by good management on the part of their meritorious commanding officers, brought into a state of high efficiency; a fact that sufficiently proves that there were neither

moral nor physical obstacles in the way to oppose the perfecting of a system at once so humane and judicious. As to the supposed inviolable attachment of black to black, and the danger of depending on the fidelity of such a force, in the event of an insurrection of the slave population, that was an apprehension more ideal than real. Kind, fair, and *just* treatment, with an infusion of as much education as their unenlightened minds were capable of receiving, would have secured their allegiance under all trials. Witness the hundred thousand tawny troops of India!—But enough of these prosing reflections.

Under the influence of the brisk breeze, our ship seemed to fly through the water; while the bright and glittering headlands as they successively broke on the view, seemed to curtsey and retire! Saint Lucie loomed darkly in the distant horizon, as if covered with the pall of death. Already the lofty ridge of mountains which partly gird, and partly intersect Martinique, struck the anxious eye of the new Tropician. The next morning's sun saw the whole fleet, now increased by our arrival to several hundred sail, safely moored in the ample bay. The whole range of

anchorage, from Pigeon Island to Dead Man's Hole, presented a forest of masts.

I was despatched on shore with a letter to the commander-in-chief, to whom I afforded such explanations as were required of me as to the state of my own general; and after a short delay was dismissed with a most kind invitation to repair to head-quarters, while a residence at Fort Bourbon for a few weeks was best calculated, by its cool and elevated situation, to restore his health and energy.

CHAPTER IV.

——— You pitying saw,
To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale quivering, and the beamless eye
No more with ardour bright:——

At sunrise on the following morning he was gently lowered into the barge in his cot, and laid in the stern-sheets under the awning. His dark and sunken eye looked his thanks to the worthy captain of the frigate, who himself assisted at every movement, and accompanied us to the shore.

At the Savannah wharf a dozen pioneer negroes were waiting to take the cot in slings; but they set about their work so awkwardly as to expose the general to a quarter of an hour's unnecessary delay, which quite agitated him, and

threw a hectic flush over his thin and pallid cheek. Six of the frigate's bargemen however put all to rights: they manned the slings, and bore the cot in front of head-quarters, distant about three hundred yards, where it was rested for a while under the shade of a spreading lime-tree. After a short consultation with the commander-in-chief and the principal physician, my general determined at once to proceed to the mountain fort of Bourbon. The black bearers now fell into their places in better order than before, and set off at a lazy pace to breast the towering hill.

The noisy chatter of these provoking people was truly vexatious, and it required all the authority of the jerker, aided by the persuasive argument of his whip, which he kept constantly waving and cracking *in terrorem*, to keep them to their work. Although there were two gangs of six each, they halted and changed every five minutes, with a load which four white men would have borne without halt or flinch for an hour. I thought I should have dropped with fatigue and vexation as I toiled up the steep ascent, which was only rendered a practicable road by

the formation of a succession of zig-zag cuts, the mazes of which seemed interminable. I had providently supplied myself with some oranges, with which, as I walked close beside the cot, I occasionally moistened the parched lips of my general.

At length we obtained a view of the outer gate of the fort, where a crowd of Irish soldiers, who had from the ramparts long beheld with indignant impatience the feeble efforts of the noisy negroes, rushed out to lend their aid, and knocking the chattering slaves to the right and left, they soon hurried on with their burden up the last ascent, the unheeded ceremony of turning out the main guard and presenting arms having been gone through. In a few minutes I had the satisfaction of seeing the general seated in a cool and spacious room, where my large hammock was slung, and into which we speedily removed him while preparing his cot, Here he lay inhaling a fine breeze, the hammock being gently swung to and fro by one of the servants.

I flattered myself the general had already experienced some benefit from the change of air, and busied myself in preparing breakfast, of

which I hoped to see him partake; but a slice of bread with a little Guava jelly was all his appetite would allow him to eat. He drank some orangeade, and composed himself to rest, which I was delighted to see him enjoy for upwards of four hours.

I watched by his couch as I would by that of my beloved father's, and when waking he met my anxious eye fixed on his, he held out his hand, now moist and comfortable to the touch, and the first words he uttered were, "*Moore, my kind boy, I live again.*"

"Thank God, Sir!" I replied; "your altered looks show the effects of your delightful repose: you have slept four hours; and as the perspiration stole down your forehead as you lay wrapt in sleep, I watched its course, hailing it as the harbinger of your speedy recovery."

The surgeon now arrived, and watching his looks with intense anxiety, I saw nothing in them to excite my alarm. He ordered no medicine whatever for that day,—nothing but quiet and cooling drinks.

The mess-room of the Irish brigade was in the lower apartments of our quarters, but the com-

manding-officer, a Frenchman of Irish extraction, had it immediately removed, and established in another part of the garrison; so that our building, consisting of six or seven airy but naked apartments, was left entirely to the general and his family. Four negro pioneers were attached to us; and the serjeant who was appointed orderly could make himself very well understood in the *patois* of the French negroes. The general's canteens afforded us all we required, and the first day of this new life passed off tolerably well. Towards evening the general was removed to his cot for the night, and I was glad to occupy my own capacious hammock, which subsequent experience convinced me was the very best species of bed for that climate. I soon learned to take my berth in it diagonally, and humour its gentle swing so as to rock myself to sleep with all the benefit of the breeze on my face.

The musquitoes, however, made sad havoc on me the first night, for which I found a good rubbing of the lime plucked fresh from the trees to be the best corrective: it allayed the intense itching pain; but the innumerable bumps and

blisters remained as proofs of the subtleness of the poison of this troublesome insect.

The firing of the morning gun shook our building like an earthquake; and, although it appeared dark to me at the moment, I rose. The daylight increased so quickly, that it might be said without metaphor,—

> Night's curtains were drawn up, and jocund day
> Stands tip-toe on the misty mountain-top.

On moving aside the musquito veil that secured my general from these tormentors, I saw a perceptible improvement in his whole countenance. My late fears vanished before such favorable appearances, and I ventured to joke on my swelled and disfigured face, congratulating him on his security from such furious attacks. I made him some tea for breakfast; and on the doctor's visit at ten, he declared that the general's fever was entirely subdued. He now ordered tonic medicines, and each day his strength seemed to return.

Under the long wooden gallery of our quarters my general would walk, leaning on my shoulder, for an hour or two at a time; while with his eyes

wistfully cast towards the sea, or to the northern coast of the island, he sighed to think his fine German brigade was so distant from his view. Some of these troops had been despatched to join the expedition against St. Lucie; others had sailed for Grenada; the remainder were at Pierre's, the chief town of the island, where already several other foreign regiments were in barracks.

It was however many weeks before the general felt himself fit to proceed to take the command at St. Pierre's. I confess I was myself heartily sick of our mountain fort, where, perched a thousand feet above the level of the sea, we had such alternations of temperature as often tried my stamina.

Having to go down to Fort Royal daily with reports of the general's health, as well as for orders, I have often felt a sudden chill over every muscle and limb, on reaching one of the sharp angles of the road, as if a shower of ice had assailed me. However, my flannels were my protection. After one or two trials of the general's horses, I found it a service of danger to ride down the stony slope; but I picked up a mule,

to whose natural caution as a mountain-traveller I could safely entrust myself, and therefore left him to choose his own steps and gait.

Frequently when ascending the hill, I noticed that my mule seemed to lag under me, as if it was yoked to a heavy weight ; and turn my head on which side I would, I could see nothing to account for the faltering of my sure-footed pad, until one evening the shadow of a human being close in my track explained to me the mystery. A bulky negro with a heavy basket on his head had linked himself to my mule's tail ; and although I turned and twisted, so artfully did the fellow throw himself behind me at each move, that I almost doubted my sense of vision. I was at last obliged to dismount, and on looking under the animal's body, I saw the incubus crouching on the off-side.

This ingenious trick of taking a tow at the expense of a poor animal is very common, and seeing how the unfortunate slave was loaded, I had hardly the heart to cast him off ; so on remounting I tacitly allowed him to *hook on*, which he did by thrusting his fingers through

the mule's tail, and taking a turn of it round his wrist:—such humanity to the man was, however, sadly counterbalanced by the cruelty to the animal.

CHAPTER V.

——— And is this the whole
Of such men's destiny beneath the sun?

Our time for quitting this aerial abode having arrived, we took our leave of it at dawn of day, and reached head-quarters in half an hour, only one-fifth the time it took us to ascend the hill.

A cup of chocolate and a morsel of bread was all with which I had fortified my stomach, and I felt languid and drowsy through sheer hunger during the two or three hours which the business of the morning consumed. The first West India regiment was paraded for inspection in front of head-quarters, and made a very respectable appearance; it was then commanded by Colonel Leeds Booth. The line of BLACK faces over the

white regimental facings had a striking effect; and in other respects they were a well set up, soldierly-looking body of men. They wore the usual soldier's jacket, round hat, feather, white drill trowsers, rather loosely made, but sufficiently shapely to preserve the form. The men appeared one and all to wear black short gaiters; but several who had not been sufficiently accustomed to the encumbrance of shoes were permitted to appear barefooted, which they still could do without destroying the uniformity of appearance.

In the rear of the regiment were about one hundred newly-imported negro recruits. These poor creatures were clad in a canvass jacket with a red collar, and loose *drawers*, the greater number being in some respects in a state of nature. Round the neck of each was a small brass chain, close fitting, with a tin label, on which was stamped the name by which he was in future to be distinguished; and for bestowing which, sacred and profane, ancient and modern history had been ransacked to furnish their quota. There were Moses and Aaron, Joshua, David, Goliath, and Nimrod; Mars, Bacchus, and Apollo; Alex-

ander, Scipio, Pompey, Brutus, Cæsar, Wolfe, Rodney; and then came the James's, Thomas's, Roberts's, with their respective progeny of *sons*, &c. &c.; with the names of all the trades in the universe.

In this manner a general baptism took place, with no more ceremony than if the parties were a pack of hounds. I had the curiosity to approach this squad of recruits, and to hear the roll called. The serjeant-major, a woolly-headed negro, about six feet high, who could write as well as read, stood in front; and on distinctly pronouncing each name, the owner of it gave evident tokens of pleasure, and uttering an indistinct exclamation, "Aw—aw!" seemed delighted at being noticed. He was then beckoned out, and formed as *No. one* of the line, his name being repeated three or four times, which his ear seemed greedily to catch, while his tongue made a rude attempt to imitate the sound. A pat on the head or shoulder by the hand of the serjeant-major was the signal of approbation and encouragement; and a mute reference to his *cane*, the reverse!

In this manner I saw upwards of fifty fall into line, answering to their new names with a readi-

ness which astonished me, as it evinced a quickness of capacity which I did not give them credit for.

The remnant of the Queen's regiment, which I saw paraded, presented a sad spectacle of the ravages of the climate. Yet though reduced in numbers, worn down by sickness and service, the spirit of that ancient corps remained unbroken; and the officers boasted that the *Holy lambs,** though closely fleeced, were as frisky as ever.

The ceremony of drafting the effective remains of three regiments, under orders for England, into corps destined for a longer period of service on this unhallowed soil, was the most painful one I ever witnessed. Some idea may be formed of its effect on the mind of the soldier by the exclamation of one unhappy wretch, who said, "*It's like sending a man up the* GALLOWS-TREE *again, who had just been reprieved from it!*"—a coarse but powerful illustration of his feelings. It was by no means an uncommon thing for soldiers thus drafted to mutilate themselves, by shooting

* So called from bearing the *Pascal Lamb* on their colours and appointments.

off their hand or fingers, or doing themselves some grievous bodily injury, in order to be invalided and sent home; previously to which they were, when able to stand under it, complimented with a thousand lashes as a memorial of the crime!

After the inspection the commander-in-chief and the whole of the staff sat down to a very abundant *déjeûné à la fourchette* at head-quarters. Besides tea, coffee, and chocolate, there were various sorts of wines, cold meats, and above all an immense Christmas pie, made of all kinds of game—a present sent from Scotland to the commander-in-chief, and which was in the most perfect state of preservation. The rich tropical fruits were profusely spread on the board. The highly flavoured pine, fresh from the parent stock, the luscious rock melon, the quince-flavoured guava, and the delicate little Martinique orange, the most delicious of its species, which seldom reaches England in a sound state, but was here presented on the branch bearing all the freshness of its rich perfume. Amongst others, there was one curiously shaped and beautifully coloured juicy fruit, called "*paw-paw* apples!" probably being

that tempting species which led to the transgression of our original mother!

Notwithstanding all these temptations I ate and drank sparingly. After the repast the official business of the day commenced. Sir Ralph transacted business, as the Court Circular says, and gave an audience to Mr. Valentine Jones, then commissary-general, an office in those days inferior in point of rank, but infinitely superior in point of profit, to that at the present period. After a week's delay at Fort Royal my general took leave of the commander-in-chief. We set out for St. Pierre in a small canoe, followed by two of a larger class containing the servants and baggage.

Now of all the craft I had ever sailed in, this appeared to me the most dangerous. The boat was formed of the trunk of a single tree, hollowed out to the thickness of about an inch-and-a-half plank; the floor, perfectly flat and without keel, probably left half an inch thicker. The length of the smaller class, such as we then used, was from stem to stern about eighteen feet, and beautifully moulded. A thaft forward, one in the centre, and another abaft for the steersman,

formed the only description of seats. The passengers lie at their length in what may be called the cabin or stern-sheets, under a fixed canopy covered with straw-matting, impervious to the sun's rays, which hangs down on all sides.

Here we lay "cribbed and confined," wholly at the mercy and skill of the three negroes who formed the crew. When rowing or paddling the men pulled lustily with their short oar, having a broad blade shaped like the ace of hearts; while, to counteract the partial effects of strength on either side, and to add to the impetus, the helmsman plied with great force and dexterity his paddle, not much longer and full as broad as a garden spade. So far all was well; but when the sail was set (a large lug of light canvass) and the paddles unshipped, the labors of the steersman became incredibly severe, for the canoe rather flew than sailed while under the influence of the fresh squalls that break through every opening on the coast. If the sense of danger in the momentary expectation of a capsize did not absorb every other feeling, the sight of the steersman and his extraordinary activity of arm, shifting from one

quarter to the other with the rapidity of thought his powerful paddle, would have formed a picture well worth sketching.

To the negro amidships is entrusted the halyards; and the brutes seldom dowse their lug till the boat is half-full of water. To do these canoes justice, it must be admitted that they are admirable sea-boats, and carry a press of canvass under which an European boat of the same length and scanty beam would inevitably swamp. The boatmen think nothing of carrying sail over a visible rock on which there are not three inches water, and of which there are some dozens between Fort Royal and St. Pierre. The hatred of labor is so strong and universal amongst these wretched dregs of the human species, that they will risk drowning rather than take entirely to their paddles.

After a variety of perilous dips and lurches, we at last made the harbour point, where with much difficulty I persuaded them to strike mast and paddle to the shore. We were little more than two hours traversing the twenty-four miles, during some portions of which we flew along the surface of the wave at the rate of fourteen miles an hour

at the most moderate computation. The larger canoes a-stern were an hour later.

The want of the servants obliged us to wait their arrival at the hotel kept by Patty Chalote, where we were regaled with a second breakfast, the delicacies of which would have tempted an anchorite, and which I positively could not resist. The chocolate, lightly spiced, was the most delicious I had ever tasted; and I felt unfeigned pleasure to perceive my general enjoy a new French roll, (white as the napkin which enfolded it,) enriched with his favorite sweetmeat the jelly of the guava. Leaving him on the sofa, where the viranda, open on two sides of the apartment for the admission of the refreshing sea-breezes, invited repose, I set off for the house allotted for his quarters, and which I found to be quite a palace compared with the naked white-washed walls and planked ceiling of our late abode. Silk curtains and Venetian blinds adorned all the windows, the extreme depth of which proved the walls to have been constructed hurricane-proof. The floors were covered with the finest estaras from the Havannah; and the furni-

ture, though scanty compared with modern European taste, was all of the first order of elegance.

It belonged to a colonist of rank, the Countess de Boisville, a widow, whose only child, a youth about sixteen years of age, was at that period absent from the island. One entire *étage*, consisting of fine spacious apartments, was assigned to the general and his suite, besides cooking and sleeping rooms on the ground-floor for the slaves and servants.

The usual luxury of the higher classes—a large silken hammock, was suspended in the apartment destined for the general, besides a lofty bed (completely enclosed by musquito-curtains) standing out detached from the wall, the foot of each pillar resting in a small square porcelain jar filled with water, to prevent the encroachments of that troublesome and persevering insect the ant.

At the rear of the house was a large and luxuriant garden, which, at the season of the year in which I first saw it, was quite a picture of beauty. It was daily irrigated by the water of an extremely deep well, raised by the primeval process of the horizontal wheel with cogs acting on a vertical one, to which was attached a rope with

earthen pots, which on each revolution emptied themselves into a reservoir. It was worked by an ancient lazy donkey, attended by as lazy and a more ancient negro; who, whenever the animal stopped, would first expostulate with, then scold and curse him; and when at last words and abuse failed to put the brute in motion, his tyrant would start up from his recumbent posture and deal a shower of heavy blows on the sounding ribs of the imperturbable animal, who, thus urged, again proceeded on his monotonous round, while his irascible driver would once more sink down into a state of half-dozing apathy.

Brigade-major Grantz, who preceded us, had already made his choice, having taken possession on his first coming of a roomy apartment in the rear of that intended for the general, and separated by a passage. I occupied a smaller one close beside my chief's, and looking directly on the ocean; an arrangement which it gave me pleasure to find met the general's approbation.

The house stood in an elevated situation, overlooking the irregularly built town, which from its situation ought to have been as wholesome as any in the tropics; but troops invariably en-

gender disease, almost inseparable from those duties which they are called on to perform, and from their exposure to the destructive damps of the night after days of burning heat.

Hardships from which the meanest of the negro slaves, and even the beasts of the field are exempt, are the lot of those who embrace the glorious profession of a soldier!

CHAPTER VI.

Bade him in grief to distant lands retire,
A widow'd husband and a childless sire.

My report of the house and all its conveniences being made, in the fulness of my heart I ventured to say, "Now, Sir, you will indeed be restored to health."—"Ah! Moore," observed the general kindly, "you have all the characteristic ardour of your country; but with youth and health you can afford to be sanguine."

Leaving the far-famed and then pretty Patty Chalote's, we proceeded up the town, through the principal streets of which a rill of pure water constantly runs, supplied by a branch from a mountain cataract at some miles distant. Notwithstanding

this ever-ready convenience for the despatch of all filth to the sea, the stench of rotten fruits, decayed fish, rancid oil, and all the abominations of a black town, was occasionally intolerable; here and there, the nose as well as the eyes were regaled by the fragrant perfume of heaps of fresh-gathered fruit, collected for sale, some under the guardianship of pretty negro girls, as black and shining as jet, with no other clothing than a short-sleeved chemise and petticoat, the snowy whiteness of which presented a powerful contrast to the deep glossy darkness of their ebon skin. Over a group of these presided some crusty old negress, whose superiority of rank and office was marked by the broad-brimmed straw-hat stuck on one side of her head, so as to display the bow of the Madras handkerchief which bound her wrinkled brows, and the large golden cross and ear-rings, and the many-colored broad-striped petticoat; while as a finish to her costume, her ill-shaped, unsocked feet appeared thrust into a pair of showy slippers, invariably down at the heel.

On our approach to the house, the general admitted its appearance justified all my enco-

miums; and this a view of the interior confirmed.

Feeling himself sufficiently recovered to transact business, I had the agreeable duty to draw out a sketch of the orders of the day, in which the general announced that he would receive the officers of the garrison of all ranks, from eleven till two o'clock the ensuing day.

By nine next morning our breakfast was over, and we set about placing our house in order. The general's liberality was evinced by the profusion of refreshments of all kinds set out on the buffet, in the anti-room adjoining that in which the levee was to be held; for in this land of uncertainty, Horace's maxim "*carpe diem*" universally prevails.

The levee was crowded; and not less than two hundred German, French, and British officers were present. The ceremony of introduction of the former was very properly entrusted to Brigade-major Grantz, from whose throat the strong Sclavonian gutturals rolled out in all their native roughness. The general was quite at home with his visitors, perfectly master of their language; and many a flaxen-fringed mouth that

morning extended itself in grateful smiles at the kind and dignified reception its owner met with.

The band of the Walstein regiment was stationed in the wide and lofty hall; its martial music attracting to the front of the house hundreds of the population of all shades of color, from the deepest black to the delicate demi-white of the beautiful mestiso. To behold the joyous grimaces, and hear the chattering and laughing of those untutored children of the sun, one would be tempted to doubt the *bitterness of the draught of slavery*, so feelingly deplored by our own sentimental tourist, who threw such a charm over all he touched. On the contrary, they appeared to be the gayest creatures in the universe, and slaves alone to the pleasure of the passing hour.

But it must be admitted, for the honor of our ancient rival, that the lot of slavery in the French islands was at all times divested of the horrors by which those cruel taskmasters, the Dutch and English colonists of former days, rendered the name of West India slavery so terrible to the ear, and so appalling to the heart of the benevolent and enlightened European.

The planters in the Spanish colonies bore the reputation of being equally kind, and attentive to

the comforts and wants of their dark brethren, as far as the humble condition of the latter admitted: this I can well believe; but to the virtue of the French colonists in these respects I can offer my testimony from personal observation, and with the expression of my humble but sincere admiration.

Before three o'clock our house had poured out the last of its visitors, when I prevailed on the general to seek an hour's repose, which the coolness of his own apartment invited, whilst I proceeded to pay my respects to our hostess, who had the previous night entertained us with distinguished hospitality.

The countess lay in a loose muslin dress in her extended silken hammock, enjoying the gentle motion it received from the hands of a mulatto girl in attendance, and whom my presence for a time released from her task; but a *tête-à-tête* with a Frenchwoman in her chamber, however customary with persons of that nation, rather put me to the blush. As my eye became accustomed to the dimness or *petit-jour* of the room, and each object seemed more distinct to my vision, I could perceive that the capacious apartment was the seat of every luxury—a magnificent bed in one alcove

—a large porcelain bath in another—while on the marble slabs, supported by gilded dolphins, which ornamented the piers, were placed vases containing a profusion of the choicest flowers, amidst the varied sweets of which the orange and lime blossoms blended their rich and almost overpowering perfume.

My hostess was a very lovely woman. Although by confession five and thirty and a child of the tropics, her lustrous eye, the wax-like clearness of her skin, and voluptuous figure, sunk full ten years of her age in the eye of admiring youth. The thin holland sheet which overspread her, yielding to the air, clung to her finely developed limbs and bosom at each motion of the hammock, and embraced its treasure as if enamoured of its place:

Senseless linen—happier therein than I.

As I gazed on her fixed and dazzling eye, either its brilliancy or that of my imagination seemed to light up the late dim apartment—I was no longer in the dark!

After an hour's visit, which appeared but a quarter of the time, I retired to my room to ponder on my *bonheur*, in making such a delightful acquaintance. My reveries were interrupted by the ap-

pearance of a fine tall negro, whose services, with those of his little mulatto wife's, the countess had been kind enough to bestow on me during my stay in the island.

The dinner-hour was five, at which time we had the four colonels of the foreign brigade to entertain. The entire conversation having been carried on in the German tongue, I was quite thrown out, and could only take the humbler part of inviting the guests to partake of the several dishes, by their French names; which, thanks to the admitted supremacy of our Gallic neighbours in *l'art de la cuisine*, renders them so universally known.

At night the whole party repaired to the *rouge et noir* table, where the bank of Madame Febvre, and the colonial militia colonel, St. Clair, presented a *fonds* of about one thousand joes (eight thousand dollars).

A German could no more live without his pipe than without the cards. The solemn gravity, the perfect freedom from all anxiety as to the fate of their large stakes, which these veteran gamblers evinced, excited in my inexperienced mind the greatest astonishment.

One of the party, Colonel Count Schlamertzdorff, (without seeming to think the slightest apology necessary for the indelicacy of the action,) divested himself of his jacket previously to taking his seat beside the lady of the house; who, with arched forehead, full dark eye, inimitable mouth, lovely contour of face, long black tresses, surmounted by a tiara of pearls and diamonds, might have stood for the portrait of the seducing queen of Egypt. Here, with all the phlegmatic quietude of his nature, the count laid down a heap of gold, probably to the amount of two or three hundred pounds; and, in his shirt-sleeves, punted away without condescending to bestow a smile or a frown on the vicissitudes of fortune.

I accompanied our hostess as her *cavaliere serviente*, followed by two servants in rich livery-coats, vests, and breeches, whose bare black legs presented a most unseemly finish to their rather tawdry top vestments.

My declining the first invitation to play did not put me out of the pale of the sporting society; on the contrary, I held my place behind the chairs of the players, enjoying the conversation

of some very charming women, whom from my heart I wished to have seen more amiably employed. I held the *bouquet* for one, while she made her arrangements on the tablet of chance, or for another became the bearer of some delicacy from the buffet; and when the hour of supper arrived, my company was as earnestly and politely requested, as if I had been some rich pigeon, in whose wealth all hoped to participate.

If at all accessible to the seductions of play, even by the allurements and example of the softer sex, here was my hour of danger; but fortunately I never have had a taste that way. I was sufficiently amused, but more often pained by merely looking on. Some adventurers, elated with their good fortune, would fall into the extravagance of embracing all within their reach; while within the next half hour I have seen the same persons, on a reverse of luck, retire into a corner, gnawing, tearing, and trampling under foot (amidst the smiles of the more fortunate) the detested pack of cards, on the dealing out of which their golden dreams had vanished!

On one of the many nights which I passed at

this temple of fortune, while hanging over the shoulder of a very lovely young woman, I was rather rudely pushed aside by a half-tipsy John Bull, an officer or clerk in the Commissary-general's department, who with a handfull of joes bore down my humbler pretensions to the place I occupied, and I instantly gave way.

He soon however, as it appeared to me, was reduced to his last stake; and which, to the amount I believe of five or six joes, he placed upon a card, and almost unconscious of his movements, reeled into a corner, where, throwing himself into a chair, he indulged in a nap. His stake won; and not being withdrawn, was again and again covered by the bankers; those engaged in play taking the same care of the increase as of their own. The run of chance against the bank on that occasion was so truly unfortunate that it became exhausted, and was at last declared closed for the night.

Every one scraped up and counted their gains; one heap remaining on the table unowned, amounting in value to seven or eight hundred dollars. No person appeared to claim the gift of fortune, till the young lady, with whom I was in

tender conversation when obliged to make room for the man of rations, (who was still sleeping in his corner,) declared Mons. le Commissaire the owner of the heap.

He was accordingly roused from his slumbers to receive the intelligence of his good fortune; and on making his acknowledgments to the company for their honorable protection of his winnings, he invited the whole party to a *déjeûné à la fourchette* and a waltz, the day next but one following, the splendour of which convinced me that the commissariat (putting the chances of *rouge et noir* entirely out of the account) must be a very attractive kind of service.

The history of one day is that of a season in this country, unless when the army takes the field, an event to which we now anxiously looked forward. Emissaries had been despatched to sound the disposition of the malcontents at Trinidad, the reports from whom were favorable to the long-projected attempt on the whole of the Spanish possessions in that quarter. The seeds of revolt against the mother-country were, so early as 1796, widely scattered throughout all the Spanish settlements on the coast of America, by the help

of British gold and British emissaries; but the fruits of this work did not appear for some years, and even then with very questionable advantages to Great Britain.

CHAPTER VII.

Farewell the plumed troop, and the big wars,
That make ambition virtue!
Farewell the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner, and all quality,
Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war!

REINFORCEMENTS of foreign troops continued to arrive in the islands, and occasionally a British regiment: of the former, two corps of French emigrants were sent to St. Pierre.

As to what cause it was attributable, I venture not to give an opinion, but immediately after their arrival a dreadful mortality prevailed. The general and regimental hospitals were crowded, and scarcely an evening passed without an officer, and perhaps ten unfortunate men, being consigned to

the grave. The prevailing disease was dysentery: some few cases of the *yellow* or *Bulam* fever appeared; but even this was doubted by one portion of the board of physicians, assembled by order of the commander-in-chief for the investigation of the subject; whilst the other as strenuously insisted on the existence of that dreadful disorder in its worst character.

It afforded but poor consolation to the expiring victim of disease to be assured by his physician or surgeon that however fatal its termination, it was not at all events the *genuine yellow fever!*

The war of systems, both for prevention and cure, then raged at its full height; the "*water-drinking*" and "*starvation system*" of Doctor M—y was combated by the "*generous diet*" theory of Doctors Y— and R—d;—both however failed! Human life seemed to depend upon a mere chance; and in hundreds of cases those who were least attentive to its preservation, escaped the too general pestilence; while the more temperate and cautious perished. It was observed, however, that the Germans suffered less than the French—the British more severely than either—and of these the carnivorous English

more than the *half herbivorous* Irish, or the *meal-fed* Scot!

My general, who was one of the most abstemious of men, preserved his health tolerably well during this trying period; but having been unluckily exposed to a heavy shower of rain, he once more showed symptoms of that insidious malady which for years will cling to those who have been once its victims. After complaining of general chilliness in his blood, he shortly after was seized with the succeeding attack of burning fever: a few days of quietness and care served to throw off this agueish attack, and he had once more resumed his usual habits, when, by a fatal confidence in his amended health, he ventured to attend the grand dinner and ball given at Government House, on the 12th of August, the anniversary of the then Prince of Wales' birth-day.

I had never beheld him to greater advantage. He had that morning received from England a small packet, which, after kissing almost a thousand times, I saw him deposit in his desk, and an unusual flow of spirits that evening lit up his fine expressive countenance. But, while in the seeming enjoyment of the gay scene, the general

was, about ten in the evening, suddenly struck with such a general debility as rendered it necessary to remove him instantly to his house, whither he was borne by negroes on the same sofa on which he had been placed at the first moment of this awful attack. I followed in silence and in sorrow, and could but ill endure the misery of seeing him for whom every hour of my life I felt increasing respect, once more laid on the bed of sickness.

The chief of the medical staff was soon in attendance; between whom and a French physician, who was held in the highest estimation by the native families, a long controversy took place. The former was for the immediate exhibition of powerful medicines; the latter for "*cooling drinks*" only. During this discussion the object of it lay insensible to all that passed, seemingly overpowered by a sense of pain, which he had no other mode of expressing than by firmly pressing his hands to his temples, as if he would compress that "distracted globe" within the compass of his grasp. Calomel carried the day against ptisan, and large boluses were immediately

administered, against the warm protest of the French doctor, who indignantly retired.

The situation of the patient was too dangerous to allow me to trust him to ordinary care. I determined therefore to keep watch myself during the night, to see that the negress, who was called in to attend him, performed her duty; for, too much accustomed to such melancholy scenes, the feelings of such persons are often blunted by their horrid frequency.

The exhaustion produced by the medicines induced me to apprehend that my general's death was approaching. A little after day broke, I despatched a messenger for the doctor, who, to do him justice, evinced a humane anxiety for his patient which did honor to his heart; while his acknowledged medical skill removed all apprehensions of injudicious treatment. As the day advanced the hall was crowded with inquirers, the answer to whom was, "The general still lived, and was nothing worse!"

A considerable abatement of the pain in the head enabled the general to collect his scattered thoughts, and faintly to express his wants to me, who watched every opening of his lips. The ad-

mission of a strong light for a moment or two upon his features presented an alteration truly appalling, and struck me with a feeling of horror which I could but ill conceal. The whole form and character of that lately handsome and manly countenance had undergone such a change in twelve hours, that I am persuaded had I been called to his bedside, not knowing who was its suffering inmate, it would have been impossible for me to recognise that face, with every line of which I was so familiar.

Still, however, I would not allow myself to think his life was utterly hopeless; but towards midday my worst fears as to the precise and dreadful character of his disorder were excited, by the kind and cautious instruction of the physician, not to come in too close contact with, or hang over the patient, but to allow the nurse alone to approach him. He then directed me to take some hours' sleep, having ordered one of the hospital mates to replace me in attendance, who would perceive when any change took place which required his own presence.

CHAPTER VIII.

A father's heart shall daily bear
Thy name upon its secret prayer;
And as he seeks his LAST repose,
Thine image ease life's parting throes.

WORN out with anxiety and the fatigue of watching for fourteen hours, I lay down for some time, and on awaking found myself so much refreshed as to be equal in my own opinion to the task of another night's attendance. During the whole of that day and evening, the general lay almost inanimate, and seemingly unconscious of his state, occasionally sinking into short and startling slumbers, from which he would awake with deep-fetched, heart-rending groans, and an inarticulate murmur of the names of those most dear to him.

His medicines were administered regularly, and received without effort; but his strength became every hour more and more prostrated. Sleep overpowered me in the course of the night, and on my waking, after some hours' repose, I found that my own mulatto servant had taken the precaution of covering me with a counterpane, and had herself watched for me during the night.

The look of the physician on seeing his patient in the morning spoke death to my hopes! I saw the hour was rapidly approaching that would deprive the world of a brave and good man, and me of a kind protector. The doctor renewed his precautions to me for my own safety, and gave me a preparation to apply frequently to my mouth and nostrils. He examined my tongue and pulse, and declared my health untouched up to that moment;—"but beware," he added, "of contact at that moment which I see, with pain, cannot be far distant!"

As the general was raised in his bed by the old nurse, I perceived a small stream of dark-colored liquid trickling from the sides of his mouth; and this deadly appearance destroyed

my last remaining hope. Medicine could be no longer administered from the violence of the hiccup!

It is one of the awful characteristics of this dreadful disease, that within a short period (sometimes only a few minutes) of dissolution, the mind suddenly attains a brief restoration of its powers; and, as if awaking from a dream, struggles through the last act of fleeting life! While sitting at the bedside, absorbed in grief, occasionally throwing my eyes through the dim light on the attenuated form and face of my respected general, I was astonished by his addressing me, not in his usual calm tone of voice, but in a hurried half-whisper—"MOORE!—MOORE!—MY WATCH!" He had not spoken to me so distinctly since his attack; but the frequent pressure of his fevered and emaciated hand convinced me that, though incapable of speech, he felt that I was still by his side, his faithful and devoted attendant!

I struck the hour by his watch, thinking he wished to know the time; but he seized the chain, and pointed to the key of his writing-desk, which was linked to it. I interpreted his wishes,

and brought the desk to his bedside. He made a sign to me to open it.

The first object that presented itself to me was the miniature picture of his lovely wife, Lady Augusta, holding in her embrace an infant boy of about two years old.

I exerted all my strength of mind to avoid yielding to those outward demonstrations of the grief which then wrung my heart. Without further sign I placed the picture in his hand, and made a motion to the nurse to admit a little more light, and retire.

Great God! what must have been his feelings at that awful moment, when mine were so borne down by the afflicting sight that my eyes rained tears,

> Fast as the Arabian trees
> Their medicinal gum!

He held out his hand to me, and grasped mine in silent gratitude for my fidelity. I pressed it to my almost bursting heart, but could not utter a word! He seemed to commune with himself, and, as I thought, struggle to give utterance to his wishes; but exhausted nature could no longer support this last and painful effort. He

still firmly held my hand with his right, while with his left he fondly pressed the picture to his lips; and faintly murmuring the sacred name of GOD and his child's, he sunk back upon his pillow, never more to rise!

The nerveless hand relaxed its last earthly hold; and, as I felt the chilling damp of death upon its palm, I placed it gently by his side, and did not move from the spot for some time, still listening in deep anxiety for one sign of lingering life; but, alas! his noble spirit had for ever fled.

When the physician appeared to hurry me away from the couch of death, after taking the precaution of returning the picture, still dimmed with the expiring sigh of my poor general, and securing his pocket-book, and other valuables in his trunks, I bestowed one sad look on the livid corpse, and retired with a stricken and almost broken heart.

But there were duties to be performed to the dead which yet required my care. In that country the passage from the death-bed to the grave is short and unceremonious! Six o'clock that *same* evening was appointed for the funeral. Detachments from the four regiments composing the

brigade, amounting to twelve hundred men, were ordered to parade at five. Shortly after that hour the body was placed in the rude and simple coffin, which boasted not of velvet, nor of cloth, nor gilded plate, nor blazoned scutcheon! But it had a nobler covering—the untarnished colours of the brave brigade were made its funeral pall!

Borne on each side of the body, they were lowered over the humble shell, on which rested his hat, his sash, and his inverted sword. The bier was carried to the grave by twelve serjeants, who volunteered this last act of duty and respect. I followed the coffin more in feeling than in form, the chief mourner! Next to me marched Brigade-major Grantz, a brave soldier, but a man whose marble heart seemed impenetrable to every tender emotion; while upwards of one hundred officers of all kinds joined in the sad procession.

From the churches of St. Pierre and St. Louis the dull knell of death broke on the ear, as we moved mournfully and slowly up the steep ascent which led to the place of sepulchre.

The solemn service for the dead was impressively performed by the chaplain of the garrison; and the triple volley, the soldier's last honor, being

paid, the grave closed for ever on the mortal remains of my brave and noble-hearted general.

The deep anxiety I felt for the fate of my late chief during his illness did not leave room for any reflections on my own, in the event of losing him. But now that the much-dreaded event had happened, they crowded on me with painful weight, as I sat bewildered in thought in the splendid desolation of our now silent and sorrowful house. The family had withdrawn to the country three days before; none but servants remained; and I passed that night in a state of indescribable misery.

CHAPTER IX.

If ever thou didst hold me in thy heart,
Absent thee from felicity a while,
And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain
To tell my story!

To collect the deceased general's property, to settle with the native servants, and close the accounts of the household, which had been for several months under my stewardship, gave occupation to my mind, and assisted to relieve it from that weight of woe which, in spite of all my efforts, had nearly overwhelmed me.

My good, my brave general! hurried to an untimely grave in the very prime of life—the self-banished victim of female folly, if not crime; the dear innocent boy who yet survived him, and who probably would never know his noble father's

worth; whose infantine image was the last object of his earthly vision; whose name was mingled with his own in his last prayer to the *throne of mercy!* these sad thoughts constantly recurred to me, and threw a damp over each rising hope which the ardour of youth called up.

The deputy quarter-master-general, Colonel Driesbach, arrived at St. Pierre from head-quarters; and under his directions an inventory of the late general's effects was drawn out, in order to their being disposed of by *vendue*, according to the custom of the service.

I was struck with the peculiar kindness and courtesy evinced by this officer towards me, so much his inferior in rank; the more so, as it was in those days an unusual condescension. The property proved of considerable value: the horses alone sold for nearly four hundred pounds. His plate, canteens, clothes, accoutrements, horse-appointments, &c. increased that sum to upwards of *seven hundred.* Nothing remained unsold but the sword, which, to my great surprise, the deputy quarter-master-general delivered into my hands, saying, that one who had so faithfully discharged his duty to his general, deserved that

honorable token for his reward! To that same sword I owed the preservation of *my* life in 1809. But it was destined for a nobler service. There was but one person on earth to whom I could resign this proud record of my fidelity! To the gallant son of the man whose memory will be for ever dear to me—to him it was restored; and by him, in the bloody field of Waterloo, the fame of an honored father's name was revived by the valor of his brave son!

My general had, it seems, been warm in his encomiums on my conduct during his first illness at Fort Bourbon, and had kindly brought me under the favorable notice of the commander-in-chief during our sojourn at Fort Royal. The good physician too had spoken so favorably of my devoted attachment to my general, during the brief but fatal illness which terminated his valuable life, that I had already gained friends at head-quarters, to whose names and favorable sentiments I was yet a stranger.

I wrote a short letter of leave-taking to the kindest of women, the comtesse, sending it by her former gift, the slave Prospère; who, in the course of the same day, returned with his lady's

reply to me, and with orders to accompany me wherever I went. The same instructions were given to the mulatto girl Marie; and by those who know what a vast saving of expense in that country the unpaid services of two such valuable individuals effect, the compliment can alone be fairly appreciated.

I repaired, with my sable *suite*, to head-quarters, not knowing what fate awaited me; but my reception convinced me that I should not be doomed to neglect. Although I had neither name nor fame to support my pretensions, I found myself an object of general regard and sympathy.

Having rendered in to the deputy quarter-master-general all the accounts of my late administration, I was agreeably surprised at receiving an intimation that on the succeeding 24th of the month my name would appear in the general orders as assistant quarter-master-general on the staff of Major-General Peter Hunter (then known by the *sobriquet* of "*Blue Peter*"). There was not, at that period, such a departmental rank as deputy assistant quarter-master-general; and the pay of this appointment was three dollars per day, with the allowances of captain.

On expressing my apprehensions that the want of a regular military education would prove a great obstacle to my usefulness in my new employ, Colonel Driesbach relieved my mind on that score, by stating that an arrangement was then in progress for uniting the offices of the quarter and barrack-masters general, and for reforming and consolidating the whole of the several stores of camp equipage, barrack furniture, and also the commissariat magazines; in the administration of which the most serious losses had been sustained by neglect and malversation; and that on the completion of this arrangement my future labor would probably (unless when the army took the field) be confined to the office duty.

The important change herein alluded to did take place in a few months; when Brigadier-General Duncan Cameron came out from England in the treble capacity of quarter-master, barrack-master, and store-keeper general, to the whole of the forces in the Leeward Islands.

I entered on my duty in a few days, exchanging my Gold for the Silver Epaulette; and had the honor of being presented in form to the commander-in-chief.

Sir Ralph Abercrombie, although then turned

of sixty, was a hale, well-built person, of middle stature, a strongly marked countenance, but with much benignity of expression; his long and shaggy eyebrows shaded a pair of keen, penetrating eyes, which seemed to search into the very soul of the person he addressed. His language was quaint, but courteous; combining much of the polish of the high military circles, in which he had always moved, with that peculiar raciness for which his shrewd countrymen are so distinguished. His neglected grizzle-grey hair, barely kept together behind by a short tie of ribbon, added ten additional years to his appearance.

Beside him stood his adjutant-general, Brigadier-General John Hope (late Earl of Hopetown); even then, at the age of thirty, an officer of distinguished service, whose tall and portly figure, handsome but inexpressive countenance, cold and formal demeanour, with that studied neatness of dress, of which he was ever such an attentive observer, presented a perfect contrast to the careless gait and gesture, and the unstudied toilet of the general-in-chief, as well as to the frankness with which the latter (who to be sure was the sovereign of the circle) addressed himself to all.

Brigadier-General (the late Sir John) Moore

was also present; an interesting and warlike-looking man, but an evident sufferer from the fatigues of his late gallant services and the effects of the climate. He had just been honored with the colonelcy of one of the West India corps.

No man could possibly stand higher in the hearts of his fellow-soldiers than the *dashing young brigadier*, for whose daring spirit no service was too dangerous, no task too difficult; and then happily a stranger to that peace-destroying word "RESPONSIBILITY!" which palsied the actions of his latter life! The greater number of the gallant men who adorned that circle now live alone in the memory of admiring posterity.

Towards the close of this month the heat became excessive, and the intelligence of the ravages made by sickness amongst the troops in the islands to the leeward was truly afflicting. A campaign was eagerly desired by all to break the dull monotony; but the season was too far advanced for any operations in the field.

The military service in the West Indies is at best an inglorious one! A murderous midnight battle; the sanguinary storming of some mountain fort, in which the science of war yields to the

desperation of the contending parties; or a desultory and desolating warfare in the woods against the poor dispossessed ancient owners of the soil; these are the only scenes in which the barren laurels can be gained, and even when obtained the victors and the vanquished quickly fill one common grave.

CHAPTER X.

When o'er this world by equinoctial rains
Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
And draws the copious steam from swampy fens,
Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads.

THE occasionally heavy rains tempered the fierceness of the scorching atmosphere; but there was danger in the relief. The foul and fetid exhalations from the surrounding soil, every acre of which, in the vicinity of the British quarters, was fattened with the bodies of BRITISH VICTIMS; but superficially buried, carried pestilence on their wings.

To those who have never had experience of tropical rains it would be difficult to convey an adequate idea of their force; compared to which

the heaviest showers of these climates would seem but

> As the gentle rain from heaven
> Descending on the place beneath.

As the tempestuous months advance they become more and more terrific, accompanied by the most astounding claps of thunder. It is at such moments that the mind of the European is struck with all the horrors of the climate.

It having been found necessary to hold a board of inspection, for the concentration of all the military articles in the various stores of St. Lucie, St. Vincent's, St. Kitt's, Grenada, Dominica, &c. &c., the deputy quarter-master-general, with two assistants, a major of artillery and the chief engineer, sailed in the month of September. It was my lot to be called on as one of the assistants, in order to officiate as secretary to the board.

Our first visit was to St. Lucie, to which island we proceeded in one of those boats called ballahoos, a description of vessel between the Dutch drogher and the *west of Ireland* hooker. We were not many hours making the passage; but never in my life did I feel a more sudden and awful depression of spirits from the mere circum-

stance of a change of place, than I experienced on my first landing at the careenage.

A few British soldiers, whom curiosity had led to the landing-place, seemed to glide about like spectres "haunting the horrid shore." Even the sooty slaves that moved our baggage appeared but half alive. A damp and heavy mist hung over the face of the land, which gave a deceptive appearance to every object. After ascending the heights, as we proceeded towards head-quarters, a being of apparently colossal stature approached our party; but as it closed upon our view, we found it gradually diminish into the ordinary dimensions of mankind; and I soon recognised Captain Creagh, an old friend, (not with *a new* but with a worn and faded face,) whom I had known five years before, when doing duty in Dublin barracks, as ensign in the 8th foot. He came from the commandant to receive us, stating that the impenetrable fog, which overhung the coast prevented our boat from being seen until it touched the shore.

This once fine handsome fellow was reduced to a mere sallow skeleton; and I sighed at his altered appearance while making myself known to him.

He could hardly be convinced that I was the forward boy, with whom he had so often disported, allowing me to wear his coat, a yard too long for me, and to trail his sword. We were to dine that day at the same table, so he reserved his inquiries for the evening. The York Fusileers and the remains of the 44th and two other British regiments composed the garrison at head-quarters; but so reduced in strength, that in all they seldom mustered five hundred effective men on parade. Yet the officers seemed to talk with levity of their old comrades, the *Toms*, the *Dicks*, and *Harrys*, who had gone to the *land-crabs*, seemingly desirous of banishing the horrid reflections of self! But Death was not to be cheated of his marked victims—the scoffer fell in his turn! Twelve hours' sickness generally wound up the scoffer's account in this world, and the eye of the survivor turning away with disgust from the ever-open grave, sought in some new delusion to banish the sense of mortality, or to drown the painful thought in fresh dissipation.

I state it with regret, that I never in the course of my service in the West Indies met with *one* man who reposed his hopes or put his strength in the Great Fountain of all Mercy, to bear him un-

harmed through the surrounding perils. If any were impressed with these feelings, well becoming the bravest man that ever served his country, they made a show of suppressing them. I may here add, as a proof of the general contempt for pious reflections, that some young fellows having discovered a prayer-book in my writing-desk, a few weeks previous to my departure from Martinique, nick-named me "HOLY ST. PATRICK FROM IRELAND!" Frequently have I heard discussions on the subject of the *kit* of some sick and dying officer, before the breath had left his body, and the various articles which he was known to possess, already, in idea, put up to *vendue*, and purchased by those who coveted them! In those days that disgusting and odious sentiment *A bloody war and a sickly season* was most unthinkingly and profanely toasted! A savage selfishness seemed to pervade every breast, like the shipwrecked wretch cast on a solitary rock, who grasps with all his strength its yet uncovered pinnacle, spurning from his feet his struggling fellow-sufferers, while clinging with desperate tenacity to one short half-hour's life!

I was myself present some months after, when

the lieutenant-colonel of a British regiment (a West Indian by birth, who rendered himself every way obnoxious to his corps by his tyranny and cruelty) was exposed to the mortification of hearing a captain of the same regiment toast at the mess *A speedy rot amongst the field-officers!* Smothering his indignation, the atrabilious despot, with a presence of mind which nobody had ever given *him* credit for, filled his glass to the brim, and with a sardonic smile very coolly gave, *A speedy rot amongst the field-officers above* ME! and instantly rose from the table, darting a furious look at the captain, as he girded on his sword with something of an emphatic gesture, and hastily left the mess-room.

The next morning at seven o'clock I beheld the corpse of the luckless toast-master wrapt in a soldier's great-coat, and borne into the barracks on some of his men's shoulders! He had been shot through the brain half an hour before by the cool and murderous aim of the Creolian colonel.*

* The fate of this man was an unhappy one. Detesting, and detested by mankind, he still idolised that profession which he disgraced, and fondly loved the wife by whom he was himself disgraced. On embarking for the West Indies, he placed this young and interesting woman under the care of an only brother: if there

After this digression, let me briefly despatch St. Lucie, by stating that we left it after two days' sojourn, in which time five officers had fallen victims to the horrid pestilence, far, far from home, with *not one friend to close their eyes.* We had exchanged at St Lucie our incommodious boat for a brig of war, which I often thought would have been engulfed during some of those frightful squalls which assailed us in the course of our voyage between the islands.

At each of the stations we visited, the commissioners saw quite enough to convince them of the necessity of an immediate and sweeping reform in every branch of the public service.

Whatever neglect had not destroyed or rendered useless, peculation had seized on as a lawful prize. The accounts of the commissary or

was a trait of soft humanity in his nature, it arose from his doating fondness of this lovely woman! But when dismissed from the army (in consequence of the fatal duel above mentioned) he returned to England to solace his sorrows in the breast of an affectionate wife, he found her an adultress in the arms of his own brother!—The details of this case were published in all their odious minutiæ, with the account of the trial for *crim. con.*—A British jury deemed 5000*l.* damages a sufficient reparation to the injured husband, and an adequate vindication of offended national morality.

store-keeper were generally wound up by the hand of death; and long before an earthly AUDIT could be entered upon, the unfortunate accountants obtained their quietus from the merciful decree of the Great Comptroller of human destiny.

CHAPTER XI.

When ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.

ALTHOUGH our visit was paid at the most unpropitious season, it was rendered the less intolerable from the invariable kindness and hospitality which awaited us at every island. Indeed, if I were to sum up the Creolian character in a few sentences, I would say the men are generous, frank, kind, and hospitable to strangers, affectionate to their families, and honorable in all their transactions. The women are really delightful! their kindness is free from all affectation; and each day passed amongst them discovers to the admiring stranger some new and pleasing trait of character: they are the chastest of wives, the fondest of mothers, and most faithful of friends.

If education and the force of habit has brought them to consider their black brethren as an inferior order of the creation, merely the link between humanity and the brute, the fault is in their system, not their hearts: pride and policy combine to rivet the chains, and perpetuate the degradation of the unfortunate blacks. To treat a person of color otherwise than with that contemptuous distinction which marks his separation from the children of a lighter hue, would be stigmatised as a degrading act of condescension, amounting to a crime.

In the British, Dutch, and Danish islands this principle is carried to the extreme of severity. Happily the day may yet arrive when without the intervention of pseudo-philanthropists or Methodistical missionaries, the good work of mental emancipation from the bonds of ignorance and superstition may prepare the way for that glorious consummation—Universal Freedom!

Having been detained several days at St. Christopher's, or, as it is usually called St. Kitt's, I had an opportunity of making minute observations on the interior economy of a large plantation, which belonged to the late John M'Namara,

Esq., whose beautiful daughters (one of whom became Lady Cranstoun, another Lady Tyrwhitt Jones,) were then in playful childhood, running about the viranda of the house, delighted with the stranger's visit.

On this large estate several hundred negroes were at work, in the intervals of fine weather; some hoeing in the cane field, others cutting down the guinea grass, or those unwholesome weeds which every where sprung up in rank luxuriance.

Many, who were expert and useful handicrafts-men, were engaged at their several occupations, as millwrights, carpenters, harness-makers, smiths, &c.

Those employed in field labor were, as far as I could observe, an inferior race, at once lazy and loquacious: half their time is passed in noisy disputations and personal squabbles, which the jerker's whip alone can effectually suppress. This terrific functionary, perched on a stone, which overlooked the general line of slaves, gave three or four cracks of his long-lash whip to beget awful attention and silence. He then delivered a short lecture in his extraordinary dialect, and very

coolly descending, walked to the parties on whom he determined to operate by way of example; and with a dexterity peculiar to his race, inflicted a few lashes with the very point of his lengthy flagellator, usually standing at four yards distance from his victim, who, whether male or female, instead of seeking safety in flight, or crouching under the lash, stood boldly to the punishment either in dogged silence, or renewed abuse!

The whip here referred to is, or was, at the time I mention, formed of a handle of wood not twenty inches long, the lash of hemp or leather twisted, and so long as to form a coil of several circles round the neck of the jerker, while the short handle hung down in front over the left shoulder as his badge of office and power. Notwithstanding the extreme length of the lash, the precision with which the wretch could strike any particular spot with its extreme point was such, that he would engage to whip the small silver coin called a *bit*, not larger than sixpence, from the back of a negro at four or five yards' distance—a feat to which the negro will often submit, for the gratification of the coin thus displaced, although with *the loss of twice its breadth of skin.*

The assembling the working slaves at dawn of day and after meal times is effected by the sonorous crack of the mighty whip—a noise as loud as the report of a musket, which it less resembles than the explosion of a large-sized detonating ball. It has the same *short, sharp* sound; a sound which often made my flesh creep from the associations it inspired.

Almost every negro, industriously inclined, (and I believe all those with females called wives,) had his small patch of ground to himself, in which was erected his little wigwam, surrounded by a garden, in which he raised fruit and vegetables, besides rearing some domestic fowl. These were his *own*, the wages of industry exercised by himself and his mate at early day, in the cool of the evening, and on the mornings of Sunday, emphatically called "*negro's holiday*," the forepart of which happy day is spent in carrying to market, and selling the produce of his little farm. In this he is assisted by his wife, who, in addition to a heavy head-load, will often be seen carrying an infant in her arms, and another on her back, deriving its sustenance from the mother over the shoulder; while the husband himself, heavily laden,

occasionally relieves her from the latter burden. There is no part of the negro character so estimable as his affection to the partner of his toils, and his fond attention to their offspring.

The afternoons of Sunday are spent in the amusements of dancing, singing, and all the noisy mirth in which their rude minds take delight. Quarrels on these occasions are rare, and generally confined to a war of words; when all the vile epithets bestowed by the white overseer on the poor negro are dealt out from black to black with most ludicrous inconsistency. I have heard one say to the other, "Dam you eye, you dam black tief!" "I cut you BLACK liber out!" or, "I see de black blood in you eye, you dam negro tief!"

Although the character of the negro dance may be termed indecent, I have seen even *blacks* shocked at the sight of a waltzing couple, while they stood straining their huge eyes into the halls or parlours of great houses. It is well known that whatever may be their faults, this race are wholly exempt from the imputation of those vices which deform more civilised nations.

General incontinency is not only discouraged,

but severely punished; and marriages, such as they are, are often more lasting and happy than those entered into under more imposing forms and ceremonies,—promoted and encouraged by the rewards held out to the virtuous and industrious.

Infidelity to the husband is a crime of rare occurrence, and if discovered, the vengeance of the injured party never sleeps.

These people have intuitively a very strong idea of a Supreme Being, of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of joy or misery. Their "*Hebben*" is considered as a place of rest from all labor—an endless range of fields, perpetually verdant, flowery, and full of fruits; abounding in streams of cool water; where they may live, and love, and be merry for "*ebba and ebba!*" "No *workee*, no *floggee!*" Their hell is the reverse,—"hard work, floggee, floggee, no play, no cool wata, no *chuck-a-bumbo!*" but, "burn, burn in fire wid Debil!!!"

Certain meddling missionaries have done much to poison the stream of their contented ignorance, by their presumptuous attempts to explain those mysteries of our holy religion, to which the wisest and greatest of our divines in all ages have bowed

the head in silent reverence, thereby nearly extinguishing the first slight gleaming of the Gospel light, which the more sensible of that order had kindled.

I had once an opportunity of hearing a newly baptised negro expound to his dark brethren *his* version of the Christian creed as follows:—

"Silence, ebbaree body!—What you all tink of Gor Amightee?" said the sable lecturer. "Well, I tell you—ech! * Gor Amightee, great man!—him lib in fine house, all gole an silba, behin de sun, because for nobody see him—ech! him born long time ago—nobody tell how long! him make us all—man, an woman, an hoss, an mool, an fish, an little bird! him kill us all when him please!" (*shuddering among the listeners,*)—"ech! him hab one son, him call Jasee Chrisee! him come down one day from him Fadda house in Hebben—and him preachee—preachee good ting for negro man! but one buckra† tief dem call Ponsee Pilee, catch him preachee—and hang him upon cross-tree—den sen him down to hell for tree day!" (Loud impre-

* An ejaculation peculiar to the negroes.
† White man.

cations against '*dam buckra tief, Ponsee Pilee!*' from the crowd.) "Well—what you tink, ech? him slip away, and get up gen to Hebben—an tell him Fadda—and he soon sen Debil for kill Ponsee Pilee, an kick him down hell for *ebba* and *ebba!*" (Shouts of delight from the hearers.) "Now lissen what I tell you, *all, ebbaree body!* You go to hell if you tief from massa! you go to hell if you lick you wife, au piccanini, au get drunk too much! You go to hell if you not give poor man drop au watá; when him sick, for cool him mout! au not work for fadda au mudda, when dem old, and lie down—ech!!!"

Now here is a system of morality which would do honor to any age or nation;—fidelity to your master—affection to your wife and children—sobriety—pity for the sick and needy—and dutiful attention to the aged and helpless parent!

Those who wish to know a little more of negro life should read that excellently written little volume, entitled, "SIX MONTHS IN THE WEST INDIES;" the lively author of which accompanied Bishop Coleridge to his dingy diocese, some few years back; and who therein powerfully con-

trasts the condition of the much pitied, but essentially happy BLACK slave of the West Indies with that of the proud and self-sufficient WHITE slave of manufacturing England! Which of the two beings are most favored by Providence admits not of a moment's argument.

As for that STATUTE SLAVE, the parish pauper, he is infinitely more miserable, in every respect, than the meanest working negro of the field; yet even he, poor crawling creature as he is, will be found, with all the overweening vanity of his nation, subscribing his weekly penny to the fund for "AMELIORATING the CONDITION of the BLACKS!!!"

CHAPTER XII.

There shall they rot—ambition's honored fools!
Yes, honor decks the turf that wraps their clay!
Vain sophistry! in these behold the tools,
The broken tools, which tyrants cast away!

OUR brig was upwards of three weeks beating up to Martinique. On our arrival, we found the preparations for the expedition to Trinidad in a forward state, and the troops tolerably healthy: our commander-in-chief was an enemy to useless parade, and seldom had the garrison out when their exposure could be avoided.

My forenoons were generally employed in the quarter-master-general's office; my evenings in private musical and dancing parties, or an occasional lounge into the grand gaming saloon; the bank of which, belonging to the same parties, had been transferred from St. Pierre to Fort Royal,

and was then established at the house of the celebrated Madame Chassevent, *originale fabricateur* of the no less celebrated *véritable Martinique noyau*. It was under her auspices that the French *fabricateur* Granmaison became initiated in the mysteries of the manufacture of this delicious *liqueur*, and gained that knowledge, which rendered his name and his noyau so famous, not only throughout Europe, but in every civilised portion of the habitable globe.

This venerable old lady, then about eighty years of age, was a beauty in wrinkles; her head was quite a study,—every feature of a face that must have been lovely in its day, preserved its regularity—her eye emitting in its last twinkling spark a portion of that brilliancy for which it had been once so celebrated.

In a rich lace dress of the age of the fifteenth Louis, with high coiffe and pendant lappets of Brussels point, this aged coquette would take her seat at the table of fortune, and game with an avidity which proved the inveteracy of her passion for this all-prevailing vice.

Her suppers were splendid, and refreshments were during the hours of play profusely dis-

tributed; yet her profits were I was told considerable, the drawer into which fortunate gamesters placed their *douceur*, after a certain number of winnings, frequently producing one hundred joes a night, and which sum became the joint profit of the bankers and hostess.

I had now been nearly two seasons in the West Indies, and had not as yet had an hour's serious illness. My habits of temperance, however they might have proved a general safe-guard, could not wholly have been relied on as my ægis of health; for some of the most abstemious of all ages fell victims to those horrid diseases of the country which baffle all medical speculation, either for prevention, or specific treatment, the physician being generally obliged to vary his mode of treatment, according to the habit of the sufferer. Thus I have known bottled porter administered profusely, and with the best effect, by a medical man of eminence to a brother of the profession (*his junior be it remarked*) during the progress of a bilious fever and flux; while the exhibition of poison could not have been more strictly prohibited than this seducing beverage to patients of a different temperament, afflicted

with the same disease, and the same general symptoms, and whose only diluent was toast and water or ptisan.

The great havoc in these climates, it must be confessed, falls on the regimental officers, whose duties, even under the mild administration of the most humane and considerate commander-in-chief, are at all times necessarily severe and trying in all the islands.

The enemy had, at the period referred to, a considerable force in the West Indies, and their emissaries were active in their attempts to incite the colored population of the lately conquered islands to rise against their new masters. To counteract these machinations, every measure which a humane and sound policy could suggest was adopted by those prudent and vigilant officers, to whom the safety of these important conquests was intrusted. The arrangements being complete, the grand expedition to the *Spanish Main* (as it was understood by the troops) sailed from Martinique and Barbadoes, joined by other forces from islands to leeward. I have already declared that it forms no part of my plan to enter into the details of battles by land or sea; the events of the

late war have been historically detailed by a variety of persons better qualified for the task than a young subaltern of my then standing in the service, who could only speak of those circumstances coming within that circumscribed sphere of action, which added Trinidad to the British transatlantic dominions. It will suffice in closing this slight mention of this expedition, to state, that in the portion of it which bears on the operations against that island, the measures were planned with prudence, conducted with spirit, and crowned with complete success; whilst those undertaken against Porto Rico presented a humiliating contrast.

My humble share in the danger, honor, and profit of these expeditions, may be summed up in a few sentences—a large hole in the sleeve of my jacket, and as small a one as an ounce ball generally makes in the fleshy part of my left arm, a captain lieutenantcy in the —th West India regiment, and about fourteen pounds (net after all drawbacks) prize money! which I esteemed myself fortunate in realising a year after the affair from a London Jew.

On the return of the expedition to Martinique,

some weeks were passed in replacing garrisons temporarily reduced or withdrawn, forming the permanent military establishments at the several islands; after which it was generally understood our highly esteemed commander-in-chief would return to England.

An idea of a general peace (on what grounds, I did not then probably take much trouble to inquire,) was prevalent at this period; and received strength from an order issued by his excellency on granting leave of absence to his adjutant-general, Brigadier GENERAL HOPE, to proceed to England, on which announcement, an epigrammatical allusion was made to *General* PEACE. At length our good general-in-chief took leave of a command which was honored in his hands, and was succeeded *pro tempore* in charge of the West Indies by General Moreshead, until the arrival of Lieutenant-General Cuyler, who arrived to take the command in the fall of the year 1797.

CHAPTER XIII.

When dire Disease, with all her host of pains,
Chills the warm tide which flows along the veins,
Not to the aching frame alone confined,
Unyielding pangs assail the drooping mind;
Yet less the pang when thro' the tedious hour
Remembrance sheds around her genial power.

It was my rare good fortune hitherto never to have been obliged to keep my bed from illness for one day, except the short period that the wound in my arm confined me to my cabin in the Scipio, (an old *rasée* of 64,) where every comfort, and the kindest attention were bestowed on me; but my hour of trial at last arrived.

I was at a party at the house of the *procureur du roi*, in the highest spirits, when a frightful loss of memory or confusion of ideas suddenly oppressed me, attended with a degree of faintness which I had never in my life before felt. I find it im-

possible to describe this peculiarly horrifying sensation; it seemed as if the cold hand of death had been laid upon me, and the reeling world appeared fading away before my dim vision. My first impulse was to make a rush to the sideboard in order to obtain a draught of sangree; but I fell prostrate on the floor before I had accomplished half the distance to it, when I became insensible.

In this state I was borne by two officers of the regiment of Walstein (one, the accomplished Colonel Count Rouvre, the other, Captain Villeneuve, nephew to the late admiral) across the street to my quarters, as they refused to trust me to the care of the slaves in attendance. On being placed in my bed in a recumbent posture, my senses after some time became a little more collected. My first thoughts, as may be conjectured, brought me back to the recollection of that awful moment, when I beheld my poor general attacked in a manner so nearly similar, as to leave no other impression on my mind but that mine was the beginning of that dire disease, which left no hope behind! Well, thought I, be it so; there are many others whose loss would be more deeply felt by their friends and by society.

The symptom that inspired most hope within me was the total absence of that excruciating headache, with which the general's disorder commenced. Mine was in a great measure free from intense pain, and my senses were every moment acquiring their usual composure; so that when the surgeon who was nearest at hand appeared, they were sufficiently collected to enable me to explain all my feelings and symptoms with clearness and accuracy.

The extreme coldness of my feet caused him to order them to be placed in hot water immediately, while he prepared some medicine. This process having been performed, and the icy feel at my lower extremities being exchanged for the usual glow of natural heat, I felt myself somewhat revived; but after another quarter of an hour's rest, a violent attack of cholera, which baffled all the surgeon's skill to subdue, brought me in twelve hours to the gates of death. The medical director-general, who was called in, was with me every other hour during this alarming period, and the watchful surgeon scarcely ever quitted my bedside during the night. A sound sleep, preceded by syncope, which fell upon me towards morning, seemed

to him, as he afterwards assured me, to be the sleep of death, previously to which he had for the first time succeeded in administering a small portion of medicine.

With kind anxiety he attended from hour to hour, until satisfied that he had turned the tide of the disorder, when he began to entertain those hopes for the preservation of my life, which the previously convulsed state of my stomach had almost totally extinguished. But the exhaustion occasioned by the ravages of the disease, and the effect of powerful medicine, was so great, that I became in a few days a mere existing shadow, and my kind medical friend looked hourly for my dissolution.

I had reason to hail it as a blessing that the powers of my mind had become enfeebled, even to perfect childishness, with the prostration of all my bodily faculties. I lay a poor, passive, helpless creature, in the hands of the attendants. On one occasion the signs of death were apparently so evident, that the old negress who nurse-tended me stretched my limbs; and after placing a quarter-dollar over each of my sunken eyeballs, she considered her task ended, and withdrew. I was

partly sensible of what was passing, and indistinctly heard the shriek of the poor mulatto girl who had been so long my faithful attendant; but, in such a state of powerless inanity, as to be incapable of word or sign.

Shortly after, the worthy surgeon paid his next visit, and saw the kind-hearted girl, as she sat weeping and murmuring the negro lament, (a low and pensive kind of whine,) outside the door of my chamber. A Captain Blake of the Royal Irish Artillery arrived at the same time to make his inquiries; and the surgeon, having apprehended my death from sheer debility, felt no surprise at the announcement of my supposed decease. He however entered the room, and standing at the foot of the bed, fixed his eyes on my body in contemplative pity.

Paddy Blake, (as he was called,) who was warmly attached to me, seeing a something in my appearance to excite his hopes, placed one of his fingers on the carotid artery, and then to my heart, declaring, with an oath, that he felt pulsation—a declaration which roused the surgeon (who was both a humane and a skilful man) from his

sorrowful reverie, and called *his* hopes once more into life.

The pulsation was scarcely discernible to the touch; but in the course of an hour it assumed a more natural and healthful character—I had passed the awful crisis! Great caution however was requisite in administering restorative medicine; but by the help of care, the most perfect medical skill, and better than all, the kindness of the physician, a few days enabled him to pronounce my life out of danger.

But, O heavens! how shall I describe the horror I felt at my dreadfully shattered state, when permitted to crawl about the room supported by my affectionate little attendant on the one side, and Prospère on the other! The reflection of my emaciated and altered countenance in the glass absolutely unmanned me, and I almost sunk to the floor as I gazed on this terrific testimony of my late suffering and danger; yet, so fondly do we cling to life, that I should have embraced it, with all its cares and sorrows, even on the condition of remaining for the remnant of my days the appalling spectacle I then presented!

It was in the progress of my recovery that I experienced all the advantages of that habitual temperance, which was with me a constitutional virtue.

A change of air having been recommended, I took the first opportunity of proceeding to St. Pierre on leave for a month, accompanied by the faithful pair, Prospère and Marie. I took up my quarters in that house which called up so many sad recollections; not however in the same suite of rooms, but in one of the apartments occupied by the family of the comtesse, whose kind and unremitting attention left me nothing to wish for. When my strength was sufficiently restored to enable me to sit on horseback, we set out for the family estate—a large plantation situated about three leagues from St. Pierre.

This change of residence was caused by a kind solicitude for my health, which this excellent woman took the most tender care to re-establish by every attention to my comforts which her generous heart could suggest. After a fortnight's residence in this delightful retreat I felt new life; but the full strength and vigor of my youth was not to be regained in this climate, even under such

favorable circumstances; I had been too deeply stricken by the hand of sickness. I felt an entire change of scene necessary to my restoration; I accordingly wrote to the quarter-master-general, submitting my request for leave to take a voyage for a month or six weeks in one of his Majesty's vessels cruising on that station. In a few days I was favored with a very flattering letter, expressive of the commander-in-chief's satisfaction at the reports received of my amendment, and stating that his Excellency was disposed to pay favorable attention to my wishes, should they lead me to request a few months leave of absence to proceed to Europe.

It may seem strange that my wishes had not turned on home in the first instance; but England had in it nothing to attract me,—the world was my home—to me all places were alike; but when the alternative was presented to me in such gratifying terms, all my thoughts of home and country were pleasingly revived.

I did not hesitate to follow up the hint so kindly given, and after a few days longer delay at Cayspilote, bade adieu for ever to the kind and generous comtesse; and bestowing suitable pre-

sents on my faithful servants Prospère and Marie, (the former of whom insisted on staying with me to the last,) I took my departure for Fort Royal with a party of naval officers, in whose well-manned barge I had a pleasant passage of three hours. In two days I appeared before a medical board, who instantly decided on the expediency of a change of air; and on whose report my leave for *three* months was put in general orders, with an understanding that the three were to be extended to *six* months, on reporting myself to the adjutant-general's office in England.

CHAPTER XIV.

Take up the bodies; such a sight as this
Becomes the battle—but shows here amiss.

PREVIOUSLY to my taking a final leave of Martinique, it was my painful duty to be present at the carrying into effect the sentence of a general court-martial upon two deserters.

The first of these was a serjeant of the regiment of Walstein, named Jean Louis Rousseau, a Breton, who had joined the royalist standard as a volunteer when only seventeen years of age; and whose gallant conduct had attracted the favorable notice of his unfortunate chief Count Sombreuil, by whom he had been promised an officer's commission. Unfortunately this promise had been forgotten or neglected by those who succeeded to

command after the massacre of the brave count; and the youth found himself drafted into a corps in which his meritorious services were unknown, and his claims to promotion disregarded. After four years' meritorious service, feeling himself deserted, and stung with neglect, in a paroxysm of disgust and indignation he formed the desperate resolution of going over to the enemy.

An opportunity soon presented itself. Having been detached with a party of fifteen men to a distant point of the island, he prevailed on eight of the party, all Frenchmen, to become the sharers of his perils and his crime. Seizing on a fishing canoe, they put off to sea, braving all the hazards of the ocean, with the vain hope of reaching Guadaloupe before their desertion could be known.

The distance from St. Pierre's to the post at which this occurrence took place caused a delay of a day and a half before the intelligence was given by one of the party despatched to headquarters for that purpose; when a sloop of war instantly put to sea in pursuit of the fugitives; and on the third day of their ill-judged expedition it captured their almost foundering bark.

Of the crew three had already perished from

famine, thirst, and fatigue; the remaining six lay incapable of exertion, and apparently indifferent to their fate.

On his trial this ill-fated youth, not more than twenty-one years of age, made a powerful and affecting defence, in which the broken promises of his superiors, his past and unrequited services, the distraction caused by the disappointment of all his hopes and expectations, formed the chief topics.

But the crime of deserting over to the enemy in open day with one half of his guard was an offence which even the most humane commander could not fail to visit with the heaviest penalty of military law. The sentence of death was passed upon all; but commuted, with respect to the privates, for corporal punishment, to the number of one thousand lashes each! But the fate of the serjeant was inevitable! The awful sentence, "TO BE SHOT TO DEATH," was confirmed by the commander-in-chief; and three days only were allowed to the unhappy youth to prepare for the dreadful execution.

The other culprit was a man of the name of Whitehead, private in the 43rd regiment, a native

of Lancashire, condemned to death, as the words of his sentence expressed it, for being guilty of REPEATED DESERTION. The appearance of the two unhappy beings, on the fatal morn of execution, was as dissimilar as it is possible to imagine; and this contrast was not more observable in their persons than in their demeanour during the last awful hour of life.

When marched along the line, consisting of two thousand file of men, preceded by the muffled drums beating the dead march, the handsome young Frenchman bore himself with the most perfect dignity and composure. Stopping for one instant when arrived before the colours of his own regiment, he raised his pinioned arm high as its bindings would permit, and shouted, "VIVE LE ROI!" which was responded by every officer and soldier of the corps, the greater number of whom, though they had so often encountered death in the field, and "*albeit unused to the melting mood,*" dropped tears of pity!

If mercy could have been extended to him, surely, thought I, this was the affecting moment to exercise that godlike privilege; but, alas! there was no commander-in-chief present, to whom an

appeal could be made, and the hard duty of the officer in immediate command was specific.

The wretched Englishman, already half dead with terror, was supported, indeed almost lifted, along by two of the provost-marshal's assistants. The firing party, which were formed in the rear of the line, did not appear until the condemned had taken their stations, about thirty yards in front, where, kneeling on their coffins, they awaited their final doom.

The Frenchman earnestly entreated to be allowed to meet his fate with unbandaged eyes; a request which the provost-marshal in my opinion *humanely* refused. A French friar who attended upon Rousseau placed the crucifix to his lips, which, devoutly pressing, he prayed for an instant, and then heaving one deep sigh he spoke no more! The bandage was tied over his eyes, which closed for ever on this world of sorrow! I watched his countenance with the deepest attention, but could not perceive a quiver on his still ruby lip, or the slightest change of complexion; the rosy tide of life mantled o'er his blooming features to the latest moment. Was this heroism or insensibility? Those who had heard his animated defence could not

for a moment suspect the latter. His hands had been crossed over his breast; he changed their position, as if desirous of leaving his heart open to their first fire:—if such was his object it was accomplished!

The poor Lancastrian proved a mere driveller; *his* piercing cries and supplications for life, up to the last moment of his existence, were horrifying to the ear. At length all being ready, the provost-marshal, while endeavouring to pacify the wretched Whitehead, waved his handkerchief for the advance of the firing party: they moved with silent footsteps in a line of single files, twelve of the 43rd and twelve of the Walstein, halting by signal in front of their victims. When little more than six yards distant they came to the "Present!" a shuddering murmur crept through the ranks, particularly those of the black corps; but in another instant the handkerchief fell to the ground, and the criminals were no more!

Seven bullets pierced the body of the emaciated Whitehead, from which issued streams of blood! while from the full and florid Frenchman scarcely one drop could be seen to stain his milk-white

vest. He had received but three wounds, "*the least of them a death.*"

Of all military duties which could fall to the lot of the officer or the soldier, this must be by far the most melancholy. The bodies were left in charge of the provost-marshal and surgeons; while the troops withdrew to their several barracks, the fifes and drums (no longer muffled with crape) playing a lively quick step.

CHAPTER XV.

Come, let us dance and sing,
Whilst ALL Barbadoes BELLS shall ring.*

I OBTAINED a passage to Barbadoes in a beautiful armed king's schooner, the Falcon, with an order to the agent for transports at that island for a passage in a British transport. My anxiety to reach England now presented a strong contrast to my late perfect indifference. The very idea had so improved my appearance, spirits, and activity, that I doubt whether, if I had again been summoned before the medical board, they would not have withdrawn their indulgence.

* TAVERN bells, it is presumed, there being but ONE great bell in the island.

At Barbadoes I took up my quarters at Nancy Clarke's, where, in a kind of barrack-room containing twenty beds, consisting of a well-filled bag of dried Indian-corn grass, a decent bolster, with a couple of sheets, either placed on a stretcher or laid on the floor, I was content to pass my nights in company with the motley groups of army and navy officers, captains of ships and others, who from choice or necessity remained on shore. My company was varied every night; and there was such an influx and reflux that it was with great difficulty I contrived to maintain my own corner undisturbed.

Although no longer indulged with the luxury of musquito curtains, these insidious tormentors passed over without bestowing a single sting upon me, while they flew in clouds to feast on the new blood of the unseasoned fresh men. Their whizzing noise (something like the singing of a tea-kettle half emptied of its fluid) proved as great an enemy to sleep as the roarings and cursings of my tormented fellow-lodgers. For the accommodation of this *shakedown* bed, a scrambling kind of breakfast, but an excellent and abundant dinner, I paid three dollars per day, and generally found

some neighbour to join me in the expense of a bottle of porter, and another of Madeira.

Miss Nancy Clarke was, too great a woman in pride, in size, and in circumstances, to discompose herself by appearing in any other character than that of receiver-general of money, and of those compliments which custom had rendered necessary to ensure civility from her dark myrmidons. Her favorite at that time (for like a certain northern empress of the last century, she was never without one) was Captain M——y of the twenty——th regiment, commonly called "*Handsome M——y;*" but which flattering distinction was borne, with equal justice, by three of his brothers then in the West Indies, one an officer in the navy, and the others in the army—a coincidence which often created confusion, when the conversation turned on the favorite of the Caribbean Venus. They were in fact a family so gifted by nature with personal advantages, that of SEVEN sons serving his Majesty at that period in the army, navy, and militia, from eighteen to thirty years of age, they were known in their respective circles by the enviable cognomen of "*The handsome M——y.*"

Although the gentleman alluded to was but a captain in the army, he was a field-marshal in the warm heart of the negro Nancy; and the slightest notice from "Massa Buckra" proved, to a stranger, a passport to the obsequious attentions of every slave in the establishment.

A son of the late Admiral Crosbie's having been my chum at table for some days, he politely tendered his good offices to procure me a passage home in the same man-of-war in which he was to sail, having been invalided. We accordingly set off for his Majesty's ship ———, where I experienced that kind and hospitable reception from the ward-room officers which I have never found wanting. They promised to afford me the best accommodation a crowded ship would allow, in the event of the captain's favoring me with a passage; but they thought it but candid to inform me that the commander was strongly averse to receiving military officers on board—their careless and independent manners towards their superiors, when not on duty, tending in his opinion to set a bad example to the officers of his ship, whom he held at an immeasurable distance, and treated more like vassals than gallant gentlemen.

On this information I declined subjecting myself to the chance of a refusal, which might draw from me an unpleasant observation. Scorning to ask a favor where denial was probable, I left the ship, thankful for the hearty welcome and hospitable treatment bestowed on me by the ward-room mess, and not a little disgusted with the character of the splenetic commodore.

I next presented my credentials to the acting agent for transports, a commander in the navy, but one whom I cannot compliment, either for the suavity of his manners, or any particular zeal for the service. Indeed, the discourtesy with which he treated a dozen of us invalids who attended his levee was so marked, as to render our visit any thing but a pleasant one to all parties. Five of the officers in attendance were allotted for berths on board the same ship with me, and we were shortly afterwards given to understand that there were already six officers on board, four of whom were in too weak a state to remove out of their cabins.

This was no pleasant hearing; a floating hospital not being, in our estimation, the most agreeable

kind of transport. But it was in vain to remonstrate; there were but four transports to spare, and even these were sent home for repairs (after two years' wear and tear in that country), rather than for any accommodation they afforded to the invalided. Altogether, they were reported to be very unfit for a winter voyage; but it was observed by one of our party, whose shattered frame appeared to hold out a slender prospect of surviving the voyage, that "he would PUT TO SEA IN A WASHING-TUB, rather than remain in that cursed climate."

We found our transport captain on shore, and learned, to our great dismay, that there were but *four berths*, all of which were already occupied; and that our mattresses therefore must, of necessity, be laid on the cabin sole or floor. On this we again assailed the agent in a body for berths in a ship where the ordinary accommodation could be obtained; but the only favor we could obtain was an offer to have our names placed on the list for berths in the *next* division of transports ordered home—an alternative which none of the party seemed inclined to embrace, the majority being

much of the same opinion as our *washing-tub* navigator; so on board we determined to go for a *reconnaissance*.

We placed ourselves under the escort of the captain, a muddled little animal, who appeared to be in a half idiotic state, guided entirely by his mate, a tall, rough-looking man, dressed as if he were on the Esquimaux coast, in order, as he expressed it, to keep out the *heat of the sun!*

The build of the boat gave me some idea to what kind of vessel she belonged; and I was not at all surprised, when we pulled alongside, to see a tasteless-shaped hulk, with temporary bulwarks, which, light as she was in ballast, made her appear all hull above water. Her naked, unpaid seams, her bleached rigging, which hung slack and slovenly, all betrayed signs of hard service and neglect; and the general odour on board gave disgusting tokens of her having been an expeditionary troop-ship.

The unpromising appearance of the whole confirmed our worst anticipations; she was a brig-rigged South Shields collier, called "The Ellisson," full two hundred and sixty tons burden, and only two years built. The smallest portion pos-

sible was appropriated for cabin room, and her stern cocked up like that of a Dutch galliot. The captain and mate both praised her as an excellent sea-boat; but a more uncomfortable receptacle for unfortunate invalids cannot possibly be contemplated: there was one redeeming advantage—there were to be no troops on board. A very few worn-out non-commissioned officers, with the widows and children of several others who had recently died in the islands, to the number altogether of about forty, were passengers between decks; where the accommodation was so ample, and so much more commodious than the miserable cabin, that on four or five of the late comers I levied a contribution of a few dollars, which, with my own subscription, enabled the second mate and carpenter to put up a bulkhead, so as to partition off sufficient room for six hammocks to swing. These arrangements made, my party returned on shore to make the necessary provision for the voyage.

We calculated on a supply for a two months' voyage, and on an expenditure of about twenty pounds each. The most experienced were named as purveyors, and in the course of a couple of days our

store of wine, spirits, porter, groceries, &c. &c. were safely on board; but, with the exception of four dozen of turkies, which we purchased from an American adventurer, whose vessel arrived the day previous to our departure from Barbadoes, we deferred the purchase of our live-stock until our arrival at St. Christopher's, at which island the fleet was to remain for two days, to collect the homeward-bound vessels of the season.

The American to which I allude being quite a curiosity in her way, deserves to be noticed as evincing the daring spirit of enterprise possessed by friend Jonathan.

It was a large ship-shape raft, formed internally of scarcely half-dressed timbers, but substantially planked, trenelled, and caulked; but little iron was to be seen, excepting here and there a huge spike-nail or a binder. It had a coating of tar and rosin, but not one touch of paint from stem to stern. Even the name, (a most appropriate one,) "THE ARK," was burnt in by a hot marking-iron.

In this vessel the adventurous master had contrived to stow away fifty large-sized oxen, twenty-five on each side, securely stalled and head-

bound; and in a locker over each animal's manger the provender for the voyage was compactly stored. In the 'interval' or passage left in the centre were a line of butts of fresh water, for the supply of the live cargo and crew. This might be called the freight of the lower deck or hold, into which the air was admitted by wind-sails, or, when sea and weather allowed, by leaving open a portion of the main hatchway; which, when necessity required, was battened down, forming a kind of round-house, on each side of which a gangway, of about three feet in width, afforded the crew room to work the vessel.

Above-board, fore and aft, tiers of coops full of poultry of all sorts, turkies, geese, ducks, guinea and common fowls, loaded the deck; while baskets of hams and tongues were lashed over each quarter. This craft was schooner-rigged, but in the most simple manner, with only three sails, mainsail, foresail, and jib; the mast, sails, and cordage, being all of the rudest materials.

The immense profit on the sale of such a cargo must certainly have been a temptation to the dangerous risk; some idea of which may be formed by stating that a turkey, a couple of which would

have been reared on the American's farm at the expense of half a dollar, sold for three and oftener four dollars; while on shore it was, after a few days' rest and cramming with roasted Indian corn, retailed at eight or ten. The price of geese, ducks, and fowls in proportion; the hams of large size were valued on shore at ten or twelve dollars. The bullocks went to the stores of the commissary-general, who paid his own price, and, of course, in those money-making days, made his *own* charge. The lean island bullocks were contracted for at two shillings and sixpence currency per pound; and as the Yankee, by selling his at less than that sum, would then realise a thousand or fifteen hundred per cent on his whole venture, all parties were accommodated.

What was to become of Jonathan's ark after his Atlantic trip I did not learn, but imagine it was destined to be broken up and sold as lumber, which is in itself a good and profitable speculation—he himself finding his way back to his native continent, enriched with the means of extending his farms a few miles farther into the interior.

Before I take my leave of Barbadoes I must

notice three extraordinary characters, who were at that time in the habit of taking their daily stroll on the quay, and whose names were then of some notoriety.

CHAPTER XVI.

With strange extremes she marked his wayward fate.

THE first Lord Camelford, with those generous feelings which predominated over all his faults and eccentricities, had taken by the hand and introduced into the brig of war, which his lordship then commanded, an oppressed and unfortunate lieutenant of the navy, who had recently been dismissed the service by the sentence of a court-martial at Martinique, under circumstances so outrageously unjust and cruel as to cause general indignation amongst the junior classes of the profession.

The generous Camelford interested himself so

warmly with his all-powerful relative, Mr. Pitt, in behalf of this ill-used officer, that he succeeded in procuring the lieutenant's reinstatement in his former rank, and employment under his noble patron: but the truth must be told:—before three months had elapsed his lordship quarrelled with his *protegé; met him*—and SHOT HIM! fortunately not mortally; and soon again took him to his bosom and his friendship, which last was never afterwards broken.

The second in point of rank, but first in the order of eccentricity, was the then Captain James Darcus, of the sixth West India regiment, who died some years since a retired major of veterans.

This extraordinary man, wild, and uncontrollable from his youth, was a native of Londonderry, and had run away from his family, which was highly respectable, before he reached his twentieth year, enlisting into a regiment during the American war, which was at that time embarked for the scene of action. It was his fortune to be severely wounded, (or, as he always pronounced the word, *wownded*,) in the very first brush in which his regiment became engaged

with the enemy; and in consequence was, with other invalids, (although against his strong remonstrances,) borne off the field, and placed on board a gun-boat, used as a temporary hospital; but THE LOVELY IDEA OF A SOLD'ER!* (his constant expression when recounting his warlike adventures,) tempted him to break bounds.

The moment he was able to hobble about he contrived to escape from his floating prison, and, by the help of a crutch, found means to rejoin his battalion just as it was going into action at Bunker's Hill.

His native courage gave him strength, and seizing the first vacant musket, of which, unfortunately, there were but too many, he took post in the ranks, and nobly fought his share in that hard-contested battle, at the close of which he was found on the gory field with SEVEN wounds, insensible to all but glory, roaring out "GEORGE FOR EVER!"—"DOWN WITH YANKEE DOODLE!"—"OH! THE LOVELY IDEA OF A SOLD'ER!" By a miracle, the gallant soldier was eventually restored to liberty, and—his legs! His valor was rewarded with an ensigncy in the

* Soldier.

4th or King's Own, which he had joined but a short time before some act of violent intemperance brought him under the awful sentence of a general court-martial.

The powerful claims which his bravery and his sufferings gave him on the sympathy of his judges saved him from ignominious dismissal from the service. He was, however, severely and publicly reprimanded, and then sent to end his days (as it was supposed) in an invalid company, stationed in his native province, Ulster. Peace came in a few years, and poor Darcus was laid on the shelf.

Desirous of an active life, he drew up a petition to the Irish House of Commons, praying for employment. After urging his manifold services to the state, (in his own peculiar style of language,) he concluded his petition with the bold assertion that he "had received SEVEN wounds at Bunker's Hill, FIVE of which were MORTAL!!!

After the roars of laughter, which the reading of this part of his petition excited, had in some degree subsided, the late Vice-Admiral Tom Packenham (uncle to the Duchess of Wellington)

with the utmost gravity stood up, and, first withdrawing the quid of tobacco from his starboard cheek, moved, "That the House, taking into its *serious* attention the petition of the IMMORTAL JAMES DARCUS, do humbly recommend his case to his Majesty's most gracious consideration and favor!"

On the score of his presumed immortality and vigilance, he was accordingly appointed a revenue officer; but his zeal in pursuit of illicit distillation having led him occasionally into some excesses, (probably the effects of his too frequent trials of the strength of the forbidden beverage, by the standard of his own palate,) his enemies considered his little extravagancies, such as breaking heads and chopping off ears, by a *coup de sabre*, as derogatory to the *honor* of the revenue; and the immortal Jemmy was doomed to sink once more into the miserable quietude of private life and half-pay, occasionally relieved by a warlike episode in the shape of a night-fight, either in favor *of* or *against* smugglers, just as he found himself in the vein. In the course of a few years more the god of war heard his prayer;

"the lovely idea of a sold'er" was revived, and the year 1794 saw him once more in arms.

The present Marquess of Conyngham having obtained a letter of service, raised the regiment called the "Derry Death or Glory;" under the banners of which Jemmy Darcus became enrolled as a full ensign; but being the senior of that rank in the army he shortly after was promoted to a lieutenancy in another of the Irish levies, with which he proceeded to England.

While quartered in the county of Northumberland, he by some lucky chance happened to fall in with the late George, Earl of Scarborough, who had the name of being nearly as eccentric a character as our hero. His lordship, probably from a congeniality of mind, formed a strong attachment to the immortal, and actually obtained for him that commission of captain, in the enjoyment of which I beheld him at Barbadoes in 1797.

This favor broke on the astonished Darcus at a time when he had considered himself totally forgotten by his noble patron. Happening to be quartered at the garrison of Chatham in the

winter of 1795, when the gazette in which his promotion appeared found its way to the "*Three Guns Canteen,*" a public-house a little way outside of the gates of the garrison,—Darcus was indulging in his accustomed mid-day luxury, a glass of rum-toddy, in familiar conversation (although for the sake of discipline at different tables) with an old townsman, and former comrade, whose less propitious stars still tied him to the serjeant's halbert; when glancing his *best* eye (for he had but one and a half) over the paper, he read the following delightful line—

"6th West India Regiment, Lieutenant James Darcus, from—to be Captain—without purchase!!!"

A sudden frenzy of joy seized on his senses: drawing his sword, and roaring out "ATTENTION" to the astonished serjeant, he instantly set about demolishing every glass, tumbler, mug, and jug, within his reach; thrust his blade through the window; and then strutted out of the house, crying, "Save the pieces; send the amount of damages to CAPTAIN DARCUS, 6th West India regiment! OH! THE LOVELY IDEA OF A SOLD'ER!!!"

Shortly after this exploit, the particulars of

which were very humanely softened down in the report made to the commandant, Major General Fox, the captain repaired to London to return thanks to his patron, and to enjoy the honor of a presentation at Court.

His Majesty, King George the Third, had some short time before been grossly insulted, and his servants and carriage assaulted by a furious mob, while on his way to the House of Lords. The next levee after this disgraceful occurrence was unusually thronged. Politicians of all parties rallied round their sovereign to express their attachment to his person, and mark their abhorrence of the late brutal outrage.

Lord Scarborough, who, with all his eccentricity, was ever a favorite of royalty, found an opportunity to present his veteran *protegé* to his master's particular notice; and on introducing him did not omit to mention the FIVE MORTAL WOUNDS AT BUNKER'S HILL!

Darcus, after he had kissed His Majesty's hand kneeling, with a fervency somewhat alarming still held it firmly in his grasp, and pressed it to his heart, uttering something about "THE LOVELY IDEA OF A SOLD'ER!" The agitation

of the king increased at such an unusual degree of familiarity, but he good-humouredly bowed him off, while the tide of new presentations swept away the enthusiastic Darcus; by which means the immortal probably *escaped* the honor of knighthood.

> What kind relief can hope or memory urge?
> Thyself the offender, and thyself the scourge.

The third person whom I shall *en passant* notice was the once noted Captain S—— G——, a man whose misfortunes and degradation could excite neither pity nor regret; his character not boasting of one redeeming quality. With the advantages of good family, moderate fortune, high connexion, (for he was married to the niece of an Irish privy counsellor,) he was so formed by nature for acts of meanness, that they were utterly thrown away on such a worthless object.

Scarcely had he entered the army in a regiment of dragoon guards, when some disgraceful action, in which he became implicated, rendered it incumbent on the corps to decline his company at the mess and elsewhere. He was, in short, to use the well understood phrase, *sent to Coventry* by the unanimous voice of the regiment; from

which he obtained by purchase a step into a young dragoon regiment, then serving in India; but before his arrival at the Cape he virtually forfeited his commission by some violent act of insubordination towards his commanding-officer, (a major going out to join the same regiment,) in a drunken freak. This gentleman, however, had the humanity to accept of his insincere apology on the condition of being landed at the Cape, and with an understanding that he would return to Europe forthwith and retire from the service.

From the cavalry service he certainly did; but by some parliamentary interest of his wife's relatives he was got rid of, by promoting him to a company in a certain infantry regiment, at that time serving in St. Domingo, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Whitelock, whose name, connected with his misdeeds in South America, will be handed down to posterity with infamous notoriety. In the corps alluded to, this worthy pair from the first moment of their meeting appeared to have imbibed a deadly hatred against each other. The most opprobrious terms, it is said, were bandied about between the lieutenant-colonel and the captain, when the latter

was found, as was frequently the case, so beastly drunk on the morning parade as to be unable to head his company.

"You 're a disgrace to the regiment," said the lieutenant-colonel on one occasion, "and the most contemptible rascal in His Majesty's service!" To which well-deserved, but most ill-timed and vilely-expressed censure the captain hiccupped out, "The present company always excepted, Colonel," almost scraping his commanding officer's nose with his hat, which he saluted with.

Whitelock had by his own impetuosity of temper and ungentlemanlike language so far committed himself, that he dared not bring this man to a court-martial.

Held in abhorrence, and avoided by his brother officers, cast off by his family and friends, this lost, abandoned man arrived in England an outcast from society, with the remnant of the regiment; but fortune once more threw the means of salvation in his way. A considerable sum of money was offered by the son of a nobleman, who had lately obtained by favor the step of captain in a West India regiment, for an exchange of commis-

sions: the tempting offer was accepted by G—; and after a month's debauch the captain was once more afloat for the West Indies.

His habits of intemperance still clinging to him, he soon fell into fresh and overwhelming disgrace. After a confinement of nearly six months, (arising from the want of a convenient opportunity for assembling a general court-martial,) this wretched man was at last placed on his trial.

A humane attempt was made to prove him insane, but his hour for impunity in crime had passed away. He was understood to have been sentenced to a disgraceful dismissal from His Majesty's service; but between the period of the finding of the court and its approval by the commander-in-chief, G****, (who had been allowed the range of the garrison-town,) silently proceeded in the night to the bank of a river which emptied itself into the ocean, and there very coolly divested himself of his regimental jacket and hat, placing a stone upon them for security. In the crown of the hat he deposited a paper, on which was written the following sen-

tence: "FELO-DE-SE!—FROM GRIEF AND SHAME.

(Signed) S—— G——."

Then gliding into the stream, he swam to the opposite bank, and making his way to the careenage, immediately entered as a common sailor on board one of the homeward-bound sugar ships, which was to sail at daylight. Giving himself out as a *run* man-of-war's man, he readily bargained for thirty guineas* for the voyage home; and having in his better days kept a pleasure-yacht, he was what might be termed a tolerably fair seaman.

His jacket, hat, and the paper alluded to, were found next morning and brought to head-quarters; and his death was publicly announced in orders. The vacancy in his regiment was immediately filled up; the sentence of the court-martial humanely suppressed; and the unfortunate wife, in due course of time, applied for and received the pension of captain's widow!

Some few years after these events Major Sir

* It was not unusual for able seamen to demand and obtain from 40*l.* to 50*l.* for the run home.

John T—— H——n, on descending the steps of the Stratford Club-house in Oxford Street, towards the close of a winter's day, was accosted by a debauched-looking ruffian in rags, in whose bloated visage he fancied he could trace some likeness to a face formerly known to him; and his astonishment was equal to his horror when the long-supposed suicide revealed himself to the baronet as his old acquaintance S—— G—— of the ——th. After receiving a sum of money from his former associate, he unblushingly disclosed to him the whole of his manœuvre, by which he evaded the sentence of the court-martial, and escaped from the West Indies!

"And what line of life do you *now* pursue?" asked the grieved and amazed baronet. "How do you exist?"

"EXIST!" replied the vagabond; "why, I LIVE on my WIDOW'S *pension!*"

The reader need scarcely be told that the ruffian had still sufficient influence over his unhappy wife, now deserted by friends and family, to induce her to conceal the fact of his existence, in order to draw the only means of support his infamy had left them.

CHAPTER XVII.

The sails were fill'd, and fair the light winds blew,
As glad to waft him to his native shore,
And fast the white rocks faded from his view,
And soon were lost in circumambient foam.

As our time for sailing drew nigh, each of us made the best arrangements which the limited means of accommodation afforded for his individual comfort. We were fortunate enough to have on board, amongst the invalided, a discharged soldier and his wife ; the former had been steward and the latter cook to a regimental mess. The poor man's health was very much broken, but he was useful in the arrangement of our stores ; the woman was really invaluable for her strength and activity. At length the long-wished for, though not wholly undreaded, moment arrived: we

weighed anchor, and took our farewell of Barbadoes.

Of the eleven officers embarked, four (as already observed) were confined to their berths. These poor fellows had contributed their full share to a mess, which it is probable they would not live to see expended. Two others were mere crawlers, but their strength, at least their appetite, seemed to improve daily. The remaining five were well enough to bustle about; and according to regulation, watches were formed of the cabin and 'tween-deck passengers.

As for the captain of the vessel, there had been a respectable baboon spoiled in sending him into the world without a tail and a hairy coat. He was a wretched imbecile, scarcely five feet high—no seaman, a contemptible muddling sot, who seldom appeared on deck in a sober state to keep his watch, and then his orders were generally to undo all which the experienced mate had done previous to leaving the deck—finding fault with every thing and every body, and generally winding up all his complaints with a pious "*God bless my soul!*—*You* boy, bring me a glass of grog!" After the usual "Ay, ay, Sir!" from

below, boy Bill popped his head up the companion with the grog in hand, which, after another blessing on his soul, a deep sigh, and a look either at heaven or his creaking top-gallant masts, he drank off to the dregs.

When the mate, on resuming charge of the deck, found how matters had been altered by his captain, he opened a stunning broadside of abuse on the little man—the more particularly obnoxious to his ear, as the mate never let slip an opportunity of hinting, in vulgar terms, at that species of interest to which little Abraham was indebted for his present command. The fact was, he was married to a handsome young wife, to whom some David of the north had taken an unholy liking, and placed her good man, like Uriah, in the post of danger, trusting to the chances of new rum or a knock o' the head leaving a legal vacancy, of which the amorous ship-owner might avail himself;—no blind speculation, as time will show.

Our chief mate, Tom Bateman, rude and rough as a bear, was absolutely a host in himself, and worth six ordinary seamen in any emergency. Brutal to the eye and ear, he was in heart as good

a fellow as ever sailed. In fine weather he was as playful as a porpoise, and about as *graceful.*

Nine years' experience in a northern collier had, from his fourteenth year, inured him to the hardest toils of that laborious service; and although he had (after a *pressing* invitation) served two years on board His Majesty's frigate Bienfaisant, called by Tom the *Bonny Pheasant,* and a still longer period in the *Belly-Squeaks,* (Belliqueux,) he had not imbibed one habit of the "man-of-war's man," either in dress, in speech, or in ship discipline: he was still the rough and ready northern Jock.*

He stood nearly six feet high, of Herculean proportions; his black and glossy hair, of which he had a most profuse crop, fell in clustering curls round his forehead, ears, and poll; and art could form nothing more savagely beautiful than this natural wig.

As he held it to be a sinful waste of soap and soft water to shave too often at sea, an hebdomadal brushing up of his chin, which he called casting off his muzzle-lashings, was quite suffi-

* The name given by men-of-war's men to collier men.

cient for Tom, and answered all the purposes of *proper-riety* on board ship. He had an eye like a spark of ignited coal; his glance was as quick as the flash of fire-damp to every coming danger; while his head was the safety-lamp to avert it.

Although no scholar—a *blessing* for which he often thanked his stars, as keeping him out of mischief—he had studied John Hamilton Moore, the sailor's *vade mecum*, with good effect; and could take an observation and work his day's reckoning by the sheer force of habit and long practice, without exactly comprehending the principle on which this (to him mechanical) process was founded.

His figures were hieroglyphics decypherable only by himself; but he would astonish the scientific navigator by his general accuracy. Tom's logic was, "I knows what I doos by my awn waay; aun if that's roight, all the rist is nuthin to nobody."

Three others of the crew were able seamen; and we had besides a second mate, who, for distinction, had probably sixpence a month more wages than the seamen to maintain his additional *dignity*, and he too was a good practical mariner. Our two cabin-boys were handy and

active; but the foreigners, Danes and Dutchmen, four in number, could hardly speak ten words of English, and did every thing by signs, or by those universal nautical terms which sailors of all nations understand. With this weak crew, a crank ship, a crazy commander, and a mutinous mate, we were even glad to venture on a winter voyage across the Atlantic.

We arrived at St. Kitt's under convoy of the ——— 64, after three days' dodging about amongst the islands, picking up ships to join the convoy, and anchored in the Bay of Basseterre in the last days of October. Even this little sea-trip did me and my companions a world of good. My hospitable friend, Mr. M'Namara, whom I encountered on the beach, gave my whole party a dinner and a *shake-down* at his house, in recollection of past acquaintance of me. This act of attention was followed by one unpleasant drawback: all my companions felt their heads so much the worse for the liberal entertainment in which they had revelled till midnight, that not one except myself was fit for business the next morning. As, however, there was a regular market established where the stock was openly

bargained for, I could not go much astray in following the biddings of more experienced purveyors. I accordingly purchased eight or ten nice small pigs, and bespoke a few dozens of ducks and fowls for the morrow, subject to the approbation of my messmates.

Almost every one who has purchased stock in the West Indies thinks himself entitled to tell the story, as having happened to himself, of the negro who asked six dollars for a very small pig; and being remonstrated with for asking so large a sum for such a little pig, replied, "Yis, massa, he *little*, but he *dam ould!*" Now, by virtue of my office of pig purveyor, I can with truth declare that no such negro logic was passed off upon me. This venerable joke, therefore, must rest on ancient tradition.

Our stock completed, we were all anxious for the signal to weigh, which at length was made; and just as our anchor was up, a canoe manned by negro boatmen pulled alongside, in which were two smart negro lads as passengers, who asked if any "*gemman on board want sarbant*, or *captain want handwork for notin!*" Being all in want of servants, we incautiously, on the recom-

mendation of the senior military man on board, invited them on deck for a conference; but no sooner had they clapped foot over the side than the others in the boat pulled off, leaving us no other alternative but to take them or throw them overboard, which latter alternative our mate Tom (who hated negroes as he did a press-gang) most inhumanly proposed, adding, "*Dom 'em, they'll swim like dooks to the shore, Oi'll be bound!*" During this discussion their lessening boat was hurrying fast to land, and we, making sail with all our power, were fast clearing the bay. It was too late to think of aught but keeping the poor devils, who had thus thrown themselves on our mercy.

That they were runaway slaves from some of the islands we could hardly doubt, as neither of them could produce his manumission certificate, (or, as the negroes call it, "*free paypa;*") but it was evident that they had been employed by some member of the British army, as they both bore on their backs some relic of our uniform. One of them, "Little Ben," had a cast-off waistcoat and jacket with the staff buttons; the other, Jean Baptiste, wore a regimental jacket without

buttons, of officer's cloth, and was equipped with an English glazed hat and cockade, such as are worn by servants.

There being a heavy penalty attached to any vessel transporting an unmanumitted negro from any of the islands, the little captain was roused from his usual torpor into a state of frenzy, on learning that we had taken two on board. Indeed we ourselves became sensible of the imprudence of the proceeding; but we pacified the little man by undertaking to answer any future consequences for the act.

During the angry discussions which this subject gave rise to, the poor creatures who caused it stood with evident anxiety awaiting their fate, casting occasional glances of horror and supplication on the rugged mate, who had but one expression at hand: "Over wi' 'em!—black beggars!—over wi' 'em!—that 's what oya says. Here 's a change o' moon to-noight, an' these dom varmin will bring us black luck!" Events justified Tom's apprehensions; but "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof." After a run of a day and a night, we hove-to for an hour off the island of Tortola, the chief of the Virgin Islands,

where we picked up half-a-dozen of homeward-bound ships, and once more spreading our white canvass to the breeze, before the sun went down we caught the last glimpse of the Antilles.

CHAPTER XVIII.

On, on the vessel flies—the land is gone!

"FORTUNE smiled deceitful" on the commencement of our voyage, which for several days wore the most favorable appearance. A steady wholesail breeze, fine clear weather by day, and brilliant nights, kept in spirits all those who had strength to come on deck, and revived the hopes of those poor sufferers below, whose only chance of life rested on a speedy return to their native clime.

Our living was excellent: it had but one fault—that of being too good. The inability of nearly half our number to consume their share of the daily mess left a superabundance for the more

hardy, not one of whom was affected by sea-sickness, although, as we launched into the Atlantic the grand and awful swell of that mighty ocean increased from day to day.

About the ninth evening after our departure from the islands, when the vessel was under moderate sail, and the first watch set, Tom Batéman as usual came down to the officers' cabin to take his supper and a liberal allowance of grog—an indulgence which the mess unanimously accorded to insúre his services and fidelity. His spirits seemed depressed and his temper ruffled; he nevertheless ate like a half-famished tiger, growling all the time, and muttering curses on the "dom blaucks."

"What 's the matter?" said one of the party, addressing him.

"The mautter!—whoy oye says again, Dom these blaucks!—that 's the mautter. Eif oye didn't see two mouns to-night as clear as the two oyes in moy head, then moy neaym's not Tom Bateman. We'll haw a precious blaw, boy-an-boy —you'll see thaut! An thin there's that soun of a —— of a skipper, as knaws naw maur what to do wi' a sheet or a hallyard in a squall than aw

does wi' his woife's petticoat.—Dom all souch chaups !".

While thus giving vent to his spleen against negroes and petticoat interest, a crash of falling spars and a shout of the helmsman caught Tom's ear; at the same moment an alarming lee-lurch of the ship threw us all sprawling. "*Lord au mercy, ho!*" cried Tom, in a tone more of astonishment than of fear, "I'm blaw'd if she haun't broached to!" In another instant he was on deck—the cabin seemed turned upside-down—the vessel was actually on her beam-ends!

Two of us scrambled up the narrow companion; and I was struck with horror at the first glance which it afforded me of the frightful situation of our ship, which happily, however, righted after the first violence of the squall had passed over us; and already had the mate with three able hands gone aloft to cut and clear away the wreck of the fore-top-mast, which had snapped like a reed on the first burst of the tornado.

The helmsman, who was one of the worst hands in the ship, had been knocked down at the wheel, and the vessel all but thrown up in the

wind. Our situation was critical—a second blast, and our destruction was inevitable.

However, she was now once more before the wind, and a bold Yorkshireman (called by the crew *Long Jack*) was called to the wheel, who taking his weather-post, boxed her about like a boat obedient to his masterly helm! "*Steadee-e-e my bow!*" shouted the brave Bateman from aloft, whose night eye was awake to every danger.

"*Steadee-e-e it is,*" responded the undaunted Yorkshireman, as the vessel whizzed her way through a sea of foam and fire, (for the whole surface of the wide water seemed to flash with liquid flame,) while her wake, resembling some mighty monster, fresh from his native hell, seemed to chase her through the boiling flood in burning inflections.

The wreck all clear, main top-gallant-mast struck, and the ship put under snug sail for the night, the bold mate descended to the deck, and after a watchful look, cast over the taffrail, in which he swept the whole horizon with his keen and anxious eye, he turned to the helmsman, and wiping the salt water from his

dripping face, said, "*Whoy, Jock, my bow,* that was what ye call's a close gow."

"Ay, ay," replied Jack, as he eased off the vessel before a lofty sea.

"Naw," continued Tom, "if she had been one of yaure heavy —— Jamakee-men, wi' his three tiers of sugar, an his hoondred pooncheons of rum, the fishes wou'd hau had a rare stiff can of grog affore naw."

"Yes, Tom," replied Jack, "but ye see this here 's a light wabbling kind of a craft, and she came up like a duck as the squall broke off. But what business have we with top-gallant-masts on such a tool, when she 's not within a foot and a half of her ballast trim?"

During this colloquy I went below and brought up a couple of bottles of rum, and with my loudest tones sung out, "*All hands splice main-brace, a-hoy!*" an order which was very cheerfully obeyed. Dane, Dutchman, and African, understood the welcome sound. A good dram all round cheered the hearts of the poor fellows; the fore-castle men again took their stations cautiously, keeping a good look-out forward. The moon, between whiles, throwing a fitful gleam of

unsteady light over the dreary scene, enabled us to discern many of the vessels of our convoy; but towering above all, like a star in the east, the lantern of the commodore, in his mizen-top, showed its steady light.

After the terrors of the squall above had, in some degree, subsided, a squall of another description, issuing from the little captain's cabin, caused the utmost consternation among those whom we left below half dead with fright. The animal had, it seems, picked up at St. Kitt's a deserted poor woman, brought out from Ireland, and put ashore after the voyage, without a dollar or even a change of clothes. Our captain smuggled her on board, and turned her in amongst the women and children; but on the evening in question he despatched "boy Bill" to ask her to his cabin to "*take a cup of tea and be agreeable*;" an invitation which the poor ignorant creature accepted; and after plying himself with liquor until he lost all command over his hypocrisy, he was guilty of that rude attempt that caused the wild shriek by which the cabin-passengers were so much alarmed.

Some went to the rescue, and having threatened

to force the door, the trembling Tarquin himself unbolted it, when he was roughly dragged up the companion, piteously uttering his usual ejaculation—"*God bless my soul!*"

There were three or four of us, who, by virtue of our having some knowledge of nautical matters, and being the most healthy and active of the party, assumed a degree of command; and before this tribunal the miserable captain was arraigned for his misconduct. Stupified with liquor, with terror, and with shame, he heard in silence our lawless decree for confining him to his cabin as a prisoner, until we could hail the commodore for orders respecting him.

He was accordingly huddled below into his berth without light, and locked up. The unfortunate woman had already found refuge in our cabin: she might have been eighteen or thirty years of age for any indication which her countenance exhibited to direct one's opinion. She could not explain her story in the English tongue, but one of our fellow-passengers, who had the advantage of speaking the language of her country, held a long parley with her; and we were by him informed that she had been literally dragged into a boat,

just putting off for a West Indiaman, by its drunken captain at the Cove of Cork; who, on waking next morning, twenty leagues beyond Cape Clear, discovered his ugly bargain. A more helpless, wretched, ignorant creature it is impossible to imagine: we gave her in charge to our steward to place her in one of the messes 'tween decks, and sent her provisions from our table daily.

It blew fresh the whole of the night: at daylight the fleet was very much dispersed; some that had shot a-head during the squalls were already hull-down, and many that fell to leeward, by the carrying away of masts and spars during the night, were scarcely visible to the naked eye. Our commodore had hardly any sail set; a close-reefed main-topsail, and the goose wings of his foresail, enabled him to keep a-head of his crippled convoy, which presented melancholy memorials of the effects of the tornado of the preceding night. More than one half of those in sight were busy setting up jurymasts and repairing damages in their rigging: we succeeded in getting up a jury foremast early in the day.

CHAPTER XIX.

Sweet are the uses of adversity,
Which, like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Wears yet a precious jewel in his head.

THE weather was lowering; a deep bluish sky, with a low, dark, drifting scud from the south-west indicated that our sunny days were fled, and henceforth we must look to nothing but storms and trouble; to which the chastening hand of Heaven joined an additional affliction.

Disease was making daily havoc upon the wasted constitutions of some of our unfortunate messmates; while between decks the progress of sickness became truly alarming.

On the sixteenth day of our voyage, the sad

duty devolved upon us to consign to a fathomless grave the body of one of our poor invalids, whose person we had never seen except as he lay in anguish on a wretched pallet, in his confined and inconvenient berth. He was a Frenchman of the name of Franquemont, of the Hompesch *Chasseurs;* and he had borne his long sufferings with such patience and dignity as interested us all for him. His last directions to those about him were, "Give my poor body the rites of religion ere you commit it to the deep!" and he died uttering the expressions "VIVE LA FRANCE! BAS LA REPUBLIQUE!" —that cry, perhaps, which first led him from his stormy home, to encounter all the perils of war, and at last to perish by an inglorious death,

Far, far upon the melancholy main!

The ceremony of placing the body on a grating, just balanced over the ship's side, being performed, the whole of the passengers, and those of the crew unemployed in the management of the ship, stood around with uncovered heads, while the funeral service was read by Lieutenant Manning, one of the invalids (himself the next candidate for the grating), who had crawled from his

bed of sickness to perform this melancholy duty. The body was sewed up in a hammock, and, at the awful words

We therefore commit his body to the deep,

a tear stole down many a cheek; and as the grating, secured by a rope's end, was cast over the side, every eye followed the direction of the body, which was for a few moments visible. As the officer pronounced the last word of the affecting service he closed the book, and turning to his companions, asked (with a smile of resignation to a fate which he felt to be inevitable) "Which of you, my friends, will perform this last sad office for me?"

The gloom which this first mortal visitation threw over us was fated not to be dispelled by any future blessing; the same soul-subduing ceremony, alas! became but too frequent.

During these days the miserable captain had been closely confined to his cabin, and we had so far taken the authority out of his hands as to place the command of the vessel in those of the bold Bateman; but the aspect of death on every side opened the gates of mercy in our hearts. The in-

significant wretch was released, and allowed once more to come on deck; where he was treated with every mark of outward respect, but no order which he gave (and in his folly he presumed to give many) was obeyed by any of the crew.

For eleven days and nights the watches had no fixed repose; no sooner had one portion of the crew turned in, to seek that rest which wearied nature required, ere the cry of "*All hands—hoy!*" summoned them once more to the gloomy deck, where the best exertions of every individual were demanded for the general safety. In order to keep the poor fellows in health and spirits under their hourly increasing toils, our lockers were freely shared; the stock of the deceased and dying affording us enough to spare. The seamen moreover did not complain of their hardships, so long as we consoled them with an occasional joint of *fresh* meat and a glass of grog; or, what appeared to them the greatest of all treats, a draught of porter, of which we had fortunately laid in several hundred bottles.

Two of the cabin berths having been cleared by the death of the late occupiers, and my berth between decks becoming, from hour to hour, more

intolerable, from the stench of the neglected hold and the cries of the wretched women and the poor children, (almost all of whom were suffering under dysentery,) I removed to that in which Lieutenant Manning had a few days before yielded up his last breath. He sunk under general debility of his system, and a spasmodic affection of the heart, during the paroxysms of which he lay as dead. In fact, he had died so often to appearance, that the final stroke of death, when it came, lost much of its terrors to those around him.

A strange feeling of self-security, considering the various perils that surrounded me, seemed to inspire me with confidence that I should ride through the tempest, though death and danger beset us on every side. My bodily vigor and mental resources appeared to strengthen every hour, and rise with those frightful emergencies which rendered the exercise of both so necessary to my safety. Devoutly and fervently did I offer my homage to that Divine Providence, which mercifully supported me during this trying and eventful period.

Every day opened upon us with some new misfor-

tune. On pumping the ship, before the morning watch left the deck, about the twenty-eighth day, an alarming increase of water in the well was reported.

When this intelligence reached the ears of Bateman, who was called up from his cabin to receive the appalling news, his countenance fell. Every drop of that blood, which, in spite of his grimed and neglected visage, used to break in ruddy flashes over his dark countenance, now seemed to retreat back to the heart; and an expression of pale terror, the first I had ever seen betray itself there, hung upon his rugged brow.

"What daw yaw sawy?" cried he doubtingly, "two and thirty inches! unpossible!" he seized the plummet and dipped it to satisfy his doubts. Never shall I forget his look of horror, when drawing it up he saw the watermark at THIRTY!!! he gazed wildly around for some moments, when his eyes unluckily fell on the poor black boy, Baptiste, who was sitting under the lee of the long-boat, eating his morning's mess. He sprung upon him like an enraged tiger; and before the timid wretch could save himself from his grasp, the mate had gripped him by the throat, and

seizing one of his legs with the other hand, had already dragged him to the gangway for the purpose of throwing him overboard, when we surrounded, and saved him.

It required all our entreaties to mollify his wrath, and induce him to release the half-strangled negro from his powerful grip. "*O! gentlemen, gentlemen!*" cried poor Bateman, in a tone of despair, "*Didn't Oye tell ye what luck we should haw wi these dom blawcks on board!*" an expression which fully accounted to us for his frantic attack on the unoffending boy, who had the good sense to crawl off, and very carefully avoided the mate's searching eye during the remainder of this hapless voyage. Bateman cried, "A launtern, ho! follow me belaw," and then springing down the main-hatchway, made his way into the filthy hold, where, with the boy, who carried the lantern, and the second mate, he explored all that was visible of the interior of the vessel.

That she had sprung a-leak was the general opinion; but in what precise part was the great object to ascertain. The boy cried out that he heard a gushing noise in one part; again the

mate's ready ear directed him by the same sounds to another; yet, after nearly an hour's exploring, the parties re-ascended the deck as ignorant of the situation of the leak as those who so anxiously waited their report.

A consultation as to what was to be done was held; and the general voice declared for the signal of distress being immediately hoisted to attract the attention of our commodore, from whom we had straggled more than two leagues. Of the whole fleet that left Tortola, only thirteen vessels were then in sight; they had been dispersed, had dropped off in the now dark nights, and were each left to their own exertions and protection.

CHAPTER XX.

——Oh! but man—proud man,
Dress'd in a little brief authority,
Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven
As make the angels weep.

To render the signal of distress an object of deeper attention to the commodore of a convoy, it should never be hoisted on trivial occasions, or any, in fact, where the unsupported exertions of the crew of the distressed vessel can by any possibility overcome the present evil. It is (or was) to the prevalence of these signals having been made on occasions which, on inquiry, were not found sufficiently urgent to sanction this mute, but powerful appeal for succour, (rather than, as I should hope, from any unfeeling in-

difference to the safety of the convoy,) which led many officers of the fleet to treat such signals with contemptuous neglect.

Our Jack, with the union downwards, was flying at the mizen-peak two days, during which time we hauled-up within full view of the commodore, before he condescended to let us know that he noticed us. Shortly after daylight of the third day he edged down towards us, and shortening sail when within hail, the officer on the watch appeared on the poop, demanding, "*What do you want?*" We expected a boat, and unfortunately had not made any selection of a spokesman; so that when the question was put, we all stared at each other unprepared to answer. The only speaking-trumpet on board had got into the hands of the little captain, whose insignificance had kept him from being of our council; and while at this hasty consultation, we had come to the conclusion to answer, "*The ship has sprung a-leak! the crew is sickly!* we want your carpenter and a surgeon!" We deputed the Stentorian-lunged Tom to be the organ of the announcement of our distress, and its remedy. The speaking-trumpet was missing;

the boy was instantly despatched below for it; while all was breathless silence, we heard a voice, forward, crying out with the trumpet's breath, "*We are in a de-plo-o-o-rable condition!*" We almost fancied we heard the laugh this silly complaint produced; and casting our eyes to the place whence the sound proceeded, we beheld the captain with his head thrust through the fore-shrouds, trumpeting forth his indefinite lamentations! on which, one of our party sprung forward to seize the trumpet, and which I am afraid was accompanied with some rough movement; for immediately after one of the negro servants was seen picking up the sprawling captain from under the windlass! Tom made himself well understood; and the laconic answer received was, "VERY WELL!"

"*Very well!*" ejaculated Tom, "*I 'll be dommed if it is* VERY WELL, *Mr. Commondore; naw that theer is Man-o-War loike!*" The commodore, however, dropped his foresail, squared his yard, and shooting a-head, soon left us to admire the beauty of his poop lantern, and—his politeness.

This was the commodore who had such an

antipathy to the military! He is now a great man, a grand-cross, and a public functionary, and, I need scarcely add, NOT the proud, but gallant George Cockburn, who never yet turned his stern to a friend in distress, or on an enemy in power.

Thus were we at the distance of two thousand miles from the land of life—our home—our refuge—left to shift for ourselves! We suffered our inverted ensign to fly in reproachful display so long as we were able to keep company, in order that the few vessels which then composed the convoy might be able to *tell the tale* in case we perished.

One sternmost ship, the Grenada, West Indiaman, almost ran aboard of us, in the generous impatience of her master to afford us succour; for although the wind had somewhat lulled, the swell of the sea was immense. As we saw five human beings launched off in the captain's boat to attempt a boarding, we were incapable of expressing to each other the feelings which filled every heart at this manly effort to assist brother-sailors in distress. We sometimes lost the boat for minutes: to see such an apparent nut-shell

pulled up the mountainous summit of a wave, then sink again as if never more to rise, struck us with equal admiration and fear. At length it approached, and coming right into our wake, we deadened the ship's way: a coil of rope was thrown to the bowman, and in another minute she was on our lee quarter. The person in charge carefully watched the precise moment for making his spring; and having made good his footing in the main-chains, the boat once more dropped astern.

A few words sufficed to explain our situation. The vessel made twenty inches water per hour, but by dint of our exertions at the pumps we kept it down to that, never letting it reach the second hour's increase; but, alas! what security had we for its remaining even at that sufficiently alarming height? One consolation we certainly had hitherto —the pumps had always gained on the leak.

Our visitor went below with the mate, and after half an hour's search, gave it as his opinion that there was no partial or extensive leak sprung in any part; that the general openness of the seams and the drying up of the caulking had made her a leaky ship altogether; but that, by

constant attention, and putting a man over the side in moderate weather to overhaul the state of the seams in the upper works, we should get to England as soon as our neighbours. This afforded us some hope and consolation. "As for ourselves," added he, "we were all *but* capsized in that squall three weeks ago: our top-gallant mast went off smack all at once like canes; we stove sixteen puncheons of rum; and our sugar is pumped up by bushels, so that we shall have a swinging average by the time we get home." This was a civil, intelligent person; and we begged of him to make our thanks to his captain and to the passengers on board (who were Major Macnamara, 53rd, and Staff Physician Browne) for the kind interest they took in our situation. We watched his return with anxious eyes, and blessed Providence when we saw the cutter in slings once more over the Grenada's stern. We edged down towards her, and coming as close as we could, (in violation of all convoy discipline,) we military mutineers fired a gun; and standing at the side of the quarter-deck, all hands gave three hearty cheers by way of thanks. Our gun was as little attended to as our signal by the

great ship, which was a league a-head, but whose movements we no longer condescended to notice, and when we did by chance, did not attend to them.

Another of our cabin-passengers died before any very alarming symptoms had prepared us for the shock. He had had a lingering fever for some days, but still crawled about to the last. He retired to his berth at the usual time, but morning's light found him a cold and stiffened corpse; so that his death must have taken place some hours before we were conscious of it. His remains passed over the side with the same ceremonies as those of his hapless predecessors, accompanied by the bodies of two poor children, who only preceded their hapless mother in the march of death by two days.

In the midst of this universal misery, we, who were yet capable of exertion, were compelled to set the example of activity, and took our turn at the pumps in common with the lowest of the crew; the gentlemen working by spells of a few minutes at a time at one pump, in competition with the seamen at the other. One of the foreigners, a Dutchman, was almost the third of every hour

employed in clearing the well, the pumps having been frequently rendered useless by being choked up with the masses of sand of which the ballast put in at Barbadoes consisted; and more than once we despaired of keeping the vessel free, except by scuttling our decks and bailing! We were now subject to the variation of winds, and what was still more to be deplored in our situation, to the most tantalising calms, during which our light vessel rolled gunwale to, as if each roll was to be her last.

We had now lowered top-masts and secured every thing on deck; still it was dangerous for an inexperienced foot to tread the deck; and accustomed as I was to the motion, I nevertheless felt it prudent to take a turn of some small rope's end round my arm whenever I ventured forward to superintend the cookery for our now diminished mess. To our equal surprise and joy we discovered all at once a sensible diminution of water in the well; and it was a happy relief to our aching arms to be only obliged to pump our spell every *two* hours.

We were in the same ignorance as to the cause of this decrease as of that sudden increase which

at first struck terror into the lion-hearted Tom Bateman. We presumed that it might have happened by some loose stuff having been carried into the leaks during the calms and heavy swells, where they formed accidental plugs. To whatever cause it was owing our hearts were thankful for the providential relief.

At this time another of our cabin messmates, Lieutenant Doran, (our Irish interpreter,) who had for many days evinced symptoms of mental derangement, suddenly broke out into the most afflicting state of insanity. His distracted mind seemed constantly to labor under the horrid delusion that we were all in a conspiracy to murder him; and when, as much for his own safety as ours, we felt it necessary to pinion his arms, his piteous cries and shrieks for mercy would have appalled the stoutest heart! He cried out for a priest; and in order to appease him, one of us was induced to disguise himself, and assume that sacred character, and, while affecting to hear his incoherent confession, went through the forms of administering the last offices of religion—a pardonable piece of masquerade, as it tranquillised the unhappy sufferer's last hours, who, after his

supposed absolution, sunk into a state of inanity, from which he never rose!

This was our *fourth* death in the cabin, and the FIFTEENTH altogether on board, including the poor woman and children, many of whom perished for want of care and medicine. Those of the latter who were saved owed their lives to the nourishment which we all combined our efforts to prepare for them, even in the worst weather.

We had now been nearly six weeks at sea, yet, according to our reckoning, were still fifteen hundred miles from Great Britain. For the last fortnight we had scarcely gained ten miles a day clear on our course, so baffling had the winds become. The days too were now so considerably shortened that it fell dark at six o'clock, and we had twelve dreary hours or more of night, with all the horrors of a wintry sea to contend with; still there were some of us who, with spirits unbroken, could occasionally indulge the laugh and joke, and pass away the dull midnight watch in song and story.

We were now visited with occasional hail-storms, attended with violent squalls, to the force

of which we could offer no resistance, but scudded before the gust. In another moment a sudden shift of wind frequently took us all aback, and it required the best skill of seamanship to prevent our vessel from broaching to. Our poor negro servants felt the grievous change; and although we fortified them against cold by our cast-off garments, they were now become in a great measure useless to us, being afflicted with cough and catarrh. We had, however, been taught a wholesome lesson by adversity, and became not only our own servants, but the attendants on those whose lives depended on the care and nourishment we bestowed on them.

On one of my visits to the lower pest-house, I was accosted by name by a woman in the last stage of life, who stated that she was the widow of the serjeant who had been on constant duty as orderly with my late general, during our stay at Fort Bourbon. He was, I recollect, a fine, handsome young man, of about twenty-five, while she appeared nearly double that age. She seemed sorely afflicted in mind, and, as the last effort of her strength, solicited my attention. I had never seen her, nor indeed had I known that the ser-

jeant was a married man; nor was he! This wretched woman revealed herself to me as the wife of a publican near London, who, two years before, had eloped with this young man, whose compliance she had purchased by a considerable sum of money, purloined from her unsuspecting husband.

She now felt the near approach of death, and implored my promise to visit her abused husband, in case I survived the voyage, and bear her last words of remorse and penitence to him. She had remaining in her trunk upwards of forty guineas in gold, and nearly two hundred dollars, which she consigned to my care to be delivered to her husband. I judged it necessary to call in a witness to this poor woman's dying request, in order to authorise me to become the executor of her verbal will. Shortly after, she resigned her last breath in quiet, as if her agonised mind had, by this effort, at once shaken off its load of guilt and terror.

The trunk on examination was found to contain the money she had stated, with other valuables; it was then tied up, sealed, and placed for security in the magazine, where it ultimately

met the common fate of the property of all. Day after day our strained hopes were more fondly bent on home, though doubts and fears almost crushed them in our hearts. After some days we found ourselves a SOLITARY SHIP; the last two, which we had held in view for several days, had either preceded or fallen astern of us in the night, or perhaps had foundered.

Our view of created man was then confined to the deck of our own poor vessel. Of the thousand millions which animated the globe, we saw in our wretched selves the sole representatives: for myself, I dared not think: hurrying from one labor to another, I sought to drown reflection in those toils which every hour's necessities imposed upon me and all.

CHAPTER XXI.

Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
His jaws terrific, arm'd with threefold fate,
Here dwells the direful shark:—lured by the scent
Of rank disease and death,
Behold! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
Swift as the gale can bear the ship along.

EACH morning we cast our anxious looks around, to catch a view of any living thing besides ourselves upon the surface of the dreary waste; but all was void and desolate. The sagacious shark hovered round our ship as if instinctively scenting his prey: every circumstance conspired to depress our hearts; but Heaven sustained us.

We had enjoyed for some days what is called a slant of wind, and could lie within two and a half points of our course; but sudden changes

which took place within our last day's run gave fearful tokens of coming danger. We had been driven some hundred miles to the northward of our direct course, and had gone about to catch, as it was hoped, a "*steady wester,*" when a furious tempest burst upon us, which left us no choice but to scud under bare poles before it, trusting to the soundness of the vessel and the skill and steadiness of the helmsman for our safety.

This frightful gale continued two days and nights, during which time not one of our officers or crew once lay down, or changed a garment. At length, on the third day, still being unable to show a stitch of canvass, and our rigging all in disorder, it was deemed advisable to lie to, in order to repair our damages. This (however necessary) was in our case a nice and hazardous manœuvre: we had the advantage of a light ship, it is true, which, up to that hour, was as buoyant as a cork in the water. All being ready, the helm was eased down gently, the after-yards braced up; she came up swiftly to the wind; when a little abaft the beam the main stay-sail was hoisted, head-yards braced up, and the helm

lashed a turn to lee: she then rode with comparative ease. Two of the most miserable and anxious days of my whole existence concluded by an event the horrors of which will never be effaced from my mind.

Towards the close of the second day, while the lingering light just enabled us to distinguish the faces of those nearest, I came on deck to assist in making sail; a partial lull had existed for some hours. Bateman and two others were on the fore-yard; the helmsman had taken his station, securing himself with a stout lashing; the sea ran mountains high. I held a momentary conversation with the captain, who, holding by the main halliards, was hailing Tom Bateman (who was at the very ear-ring of the fore-yard) and the others, to take care of themselves. At that moment a sudden darkness hung over the ship, as if she lay in the shadow of some mighty mountain. Urged by a powerful instinct, I rushed abaft, and crouching beside the aftermost gun, twisted my arm in its lashings, and held fast; the thought and the action were momentary and simultaneous. The last sound my ear caught was, "MOIND YOURSELVES THERE ON DECK."

In another instant I felt myself as if overwhelmed in a watery grave—a frightful crash—a shriek—a confusion of horrid sounds died on my ear: almost suffocated, gasping for breath, I felt the weight of waters pass over my drenched body.

Either my eyes or my memory seemed to betray me as I opened them, and beheld the altered deck: our boats were swept from the booms; the bulwark on both sides from the main to the forechains was carried away as if by a broadside of twenty-four pounders. I could not perceive a soul on deck but the carefully-lashed helmsman, who seemed perfectly master of the wheel; the ship was before the wind; dismal shrieks arose from cabin and deck; but the danger had in some degree passed. A monstrous sea had struck the ship right on the beam: it carried all before it: its curling top had nearly swept from the fore-yard our daring mate, and his two companions in danger. The unfortunate little captain, and a fine active young fellow, Lieutenant Fredericks of the 60th regiment, were victims of its fury; they were prematurely hurried to their watery grave.

Lieutenant Fredericks had for several nights

past shared my cloak as we sat sheltered under the lee of the after-bulwark, ready to take our share of the duty on deck: he was a cheerful kind-hearted young fellow, ever ready to attend and oblige his more feeble messmates. Poor soul! he had not been a *second* on deck when he met his deplorable fate. I reflected with satisfaction that the last words I had addressed to the unfortunate captain were those of kindness. I should have been miserable had he left the world with the recollection of one word of harshness from my tongue upon his mind.

The people below were all afloat; the water had rushed down the companion. The main hatchway had fortunately been closely battened down all day, but sufficient of the sea had found its way downwards to set every thing swimming; the cries of the poor women and their little innocents were heart-rending.

It was now within two days of Christmas. Ah! how many thoughts this reflection called up in the minds of all. Among the most sanguine of our party was a youth of my own age, Lieutenant Charles Hanby Williams, of a West India regiment, the son of an old soldier, a Northumbrian,

who, although from the day of our departure from the islands to the present, had never been able to move, without the aid of a friendly arm, yet sung with his feeble voice a Christmas carol, and seemed as full of the well recollected festivity of the season as if beside his paternal hearth.

"Come, gentlemen," he would say with his peculiar accent, glass in hand, "*Herwe's a merwy Christmas to us all!*" although scarcely able to quaff his own sentiment. Happily, Heaven did preserve him to enjoy his family's embraces after all his perils.

We now seemed to have caught the long-desired westerly wind, which blew with steadiness; the nights were bright and starry, and the days clear, cold and bracing. Christmas was celebrated first by the prayers for the day, and afterwards by a general feast, in which all on board partook. Tom Bateman had been dubbed captain, but not to the entire content of the crew; but the four military men, who still assumed the control of all parties, kept down discontent. This day passed off in a manner that for the time dissipated all painful reflections: on the next

but one, a shout of "*Land! land, on the larboard beam!*" drew our attention to that quarter, and our only astonishment was how it could so long have escaped our observation.

It was a remarkably lofty range of mountains, and, according to the conjecture of the most experienced of the crew, was the south-west coast of Ireland. Whether this opinion was or was not correct, our captain-mate acted upon it, and shaped the course a point or two to the southward. The channel chart was unrolled, the deep line rigged; but after several trials we could find no certain soundings: in order not to overrun our safe distance, we shortened sail at nightfall, and kept a good look-out. Scarcely an eye in the ship, of those who were fit to keep the deck, was closed in sleep during two anxious nights.

A little before day-break on the third morning a dim light broke through the haze and fog, which the more experienced of the crew pronounced to be the Lizard, an opinion which was disputed by others. The daylight, however, showed us the loom of the land as far as the eye could reach on the lee-bow, and we there-

fore boldly carried on, being now satisfied by our soundings that we were in the British Channel. We kept the north shore well on board, so as to be able to make a port in the event of any sudden danger, as our leak once more betrayed alarming symptoms of increase. The lead was out every half hour, and we were now in sight of the long-wished-for land! Hope beat high in every bosom, although the increase of water in the well gave us pangs which we could not dissemble, even while congratulating each other on our unexpected release from misery.

All hands now worked by turns at the pumps; even the poor invalids between decks, who had not strength to lend their aid during the voyage across the Atlantic, made a feeble but hearty effort to aid our exertions.

Next day we clearly saw, during the intervals of the fog, several well-known points of the coast of Devon. It was blowing remarkably fresh, notwithstanding which we carried *whole* sail to drive the vessel along through the water, as our salvation depended on the speedy attainment of a port. Although our labor at the pumps was incessant, we could not free the vessel to two feet

water. THIRTY INCHES was the average after all our toils!

Three of the oldest seamen, having been seen in earnest conversation on the forecastle, apart from the rest of the crew, it appeared to us abaft that they meditated some extraordinary measure. Before we could ascertain their wishes or intentions, Captain Hawkins, the senior officer on board, who disappeared for a minute or two, suddenly showed himself on deck armed with his sword drawn, a brace of pistols stuck in his handkerchief, with which he girded himself like a belt; and rushing forward most rashly, he charged these men with an intention of taking the ship into a French port, peremptorily ordering us as his junior officers to arm ourselves, and under his command to enforce the duty of the vessel.

This mad accusation drove the seamen into an almost open state of mutiny. Our united remonstrances to appease this maniac were in vain. At length, in conjunction with the three companions who had shared my toils during the voyage, and the feeble Williams, I positively denied his authority for my own part, and that of the four subaltern officers acting under my advice.

On "Long Jack" coming aft to take his turn at the helm, he repeated his accusation, protesting that he would stand by him, pistol in hand, to prevent him steering for the French coast. The helmsman made no reply to this bravado, but bestowed a look of contempt on the infuriated captain, which showed him how much he despised the silly threat.

That there was something extraordinary in contemplation by a portion of the crew was evident, but the impetuosity of this inconsiderate man put all chance of explanation out of our reach. Meanwhile, the water in the hold was gaining fast upon us. Although we had more than enough wind, and a cloud of sail, we found the ship going but five knots an hour by the log.

CHAPTER XXII.

As yet 'tis midnight deep: the weary clouds,
Slow melting, mingle into solid gloom.

EVENING was closing fast, slight snow-showers had fallen during the afternoon, a thick fog hovered over the land, and daylight left us in this critical state. The pump-handles were never at rest for ten minutes during this long, long night; they were chiefly worked by the officers, the foreigners, and the negroes. The whole crew became sulky: even Bateman, when called to his watch at four o'clock, did not appear for twenty minutes; and shortly after his coming on deck there was an alarm of fire in his cabin! He had left the stump of his lighted candle, pressed with his thumb,

against the thin bulkhead, and in its fall, from its own heat, it set fire to the bedclothes. Fortunately they had not been dry for the last six weeks, and a stifling smoke without flame was soon subdued; but it caused confusion, and increased ill-humour among all.

We caught occasional glimpses of the southern coast of the Wight as we passed that island in the early part of the morning, but the dense fog baffled all our attempts to make a harbour. We had a leading wind to take us through the Needles could we have ventured on the attempt.

Since we entered the Channel we had seen but one vessel; and as the morning advanced we again had her distinctly in view, about two leagues a-head; and with the help of our glasses we discovered her to be one of our late convoy. While forward, observing this vessel, the boy Bill whispered to me that the seamen below were breaking into the late captain's cabin through the steerage, and had already got at his stores, and helped themselves. I consulted Tom Bateman as to what could be done to prevent further mischief. His reply assured me that our control was entirely lost by the conduct of the mad captain;

"And the only thing," said Tom, "these men wanted was a scramble at the skipper's lockers; and they meant no harm to us." Shortly after these men came on deck dressed in their best clothes, (a sure sign of an expectation of wreck, or abandonment of the ship,) and evidently the worse for liquor.

To venture on a remonstrance with men in their state would have been insane. The boys were sober, and so was Bateman and the foreigners; and it occurred to me that, by making the others completely drunk, we might render them powerless. I therefore ordered up a bottle of rum and one of Madeira, and challenged them for a half-hour's spell at the pumps—the officers and the boys against the old seamen, commencing the trial with nearly a tumbler of rum each (we taking our wine). To work we went: each seaman, as his spell of eight or ten minutes ended, was plied with rum in abundance. The plan succeeded: they worked like angry devils; and having put their own pump out of order, came to ours, and shoved us away with a rudeness which we could readily pardon, and worked at that until completely exhausted: they then reeled forward, and

found their way down the fore-hatch to sleep off their intoxication.

Whatever doubts we might have entertained of Bateman, from his altered manner during the last two days, he now proved himself staunch to us at the moment when his fidelity was most required. He spoke to the outrageous captain with a degree of firmness and good sense I little expected; although in his own rude northern dialect, he told him in a few words that *he* would command and *would* be obeyed, or, as he emphatically concluded, "*Yauw aund oye shawll see whaw's the better maun —moind thaut,* Mister Coptain!"

After an ineffectual appeal to us to support his authority, this intemperate man retired to the cabin, to make a draft of the charges he meant to exhibit against the whole of us, comprising the crimes of *insubordination, disobedience of orders, mutiny, and sedition!* and which he had the folly to send us by one of the invalid serjeants, with orders to consider ourselves under arrest.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Hark! what means that dreadful cry?

A THICK snow-storm, which lasted nearly two hours, had sent us on a dozen miles; and it was just clearing off, when an alarming shout from one of the boys, who was forward on the look-out, struck all ears with the dismal sounds of "*Breakers a-head, and a ship ashore!!!*"

Bateman, who had been leaning on the capstan in a desponding attitude during the last half hour, scarcely removing the flakes of snow that formed in drifts round his ample chest, and occasionally sighing like a wounded bear, instantly rushed forward, and his powerful voice was soon heard by the helmsman, "Hard a port!"—"Brace up

main yard !"—" Run up main stay-sail !"—" Mon in the chains !" In an instant all the crew were on deck except the three drunkards, who were lying below insensible to danger. There was a strong flood-tide setting right on the reef, on which the hapless vessel was transfixed, and it required all our skill to prevent the ship falling to leeward.

"What have you got ?" cried Tom to the man in the chains.

" Quarter less five !" (sung out the man.)

" Heave again ! po-o-rt, po-o-rt !"

" And a-half SIX !"

" Cheerly, cheerly, my hearts ! " (cried Tom.)

" By the mark SEVEN !"

" No near ! keep her a clean full ! Now my mon ?"

" By the deep ELEVEN !"

" Hurrah ! hurrah ! my boys—all clear ! steady that."

Tom's cheers assured us of our own safety from our late imminent danger, and we now ranged ourselves along the lee-quarter to take a sad view of the unhappy beings, whose destruction we saw

was inevitable, and from whom all hope must have fled, when at our nearer approach they beheld the nakedness of our deck—not a boat, not a spare spar was to be seen; our forlorn appearance sufficiently betokened our utter inability to afford the slightest relief.

We were near enough for some moments to hear the heart-rending cries of our perishing fellow-creatures; to behold them in all the agony of despair, with hands uplifted towards our vessel, as if imploring that aid which we had not the power to afford! The sea made free passage over the vessel amidships; and we every instant expected to see her part. A cluster of men, whom we supposed to be the crew, were crowded on the forecastle and bowsprit; while on the poop we could discern a group of several females, whose frantic shrieks pierced our ears during the distressing period in which we passed within three hundred yards of the wreck; our own agonies were only inferior to those of the wretched sufferers.

Oh 'twas a sight to blanch joy's rosy cheek!

Even the feeling of self-security, so dear to our

frail nature, lost its force for the moment. To our anxious question, "Tom, Tom, can we do nothing to save even the women?" poor Bateman, who stood beside the helmsman blubbering like a child, replied—"Nauw, gentlemen, nauw!" and as with his tarry cuff he wiped off the tide of tears which flowed down his rugged cheeks, he exclaimed, "God! God be wi em! poor—poor saulls! nauwthing—nauwthing caun save them nowe!" These words, uttered in tones of the deepest melancholy, were scarcely pronounced, ere his ready eye caught the symptoms of a furious squall approaching, and a thick cloud of fleecy snow ready to burst upon us.

"Stand by topsail halliards! Dom me be quick!" roared out Tom; "don't ye see what's arter us? Dowse all!"

The squall soon caught us; but we were pretty well prepared to meet its fury: we scudded for about a quarter of an hour, when a clear to leeward gave us a parting sight of the breakers; but, alas! *not the ship!*—she had gone to pieces, and every soul on board had perished.

Two seamen, who on her first striking had cast themselves off on the wreck of a topmast,

and were fortunate enough to have been picked up, after being four hours in the water, clinging to their frail support, gave these particulars, which we afterwards learnt also from the newspapers, which stated that twenty-seven persons had perished; amongst the number were the wife and three daughters of Major Morden, of the eighty-seventh regiment, with three servants.

This was the unhappy group we had beheld in their last moments of life, and whose dismal shriek of death I never can forget!

The day was now waning apace, when Tom Bateman, who had just plummed the well, called us together, and with the most perfect calmness of voice and manner pronounced the doom of the ship.

"*Poor Ellison,*" said he, "has not mauny hours to float!" a general expression of horror escaped us. "Sautly! sautly, gemmen!" said this hero of his own sphere, "aul's naut laust that's in danger; it's nauw three quarters floud, and if we could foind a good berth to roon her ashore, whoy all on us moight be saved, snoug and quoiet. Saw whilst it's dayloight suppose we close the shore, and foire a goon or two,

and mawhaap soome of these here coast-crauft chaups may put off to us."

The love of life was too dear in all to allow any one to offer an objection to a plan which held out the only chance of its preservation. We had already *four feet water in the hold!* with a momentary increase. Three of the best seamen on board were lying drunk, and wholly unserviceable to us; the remainder of the crew, and the poor foreigners particularly, behaved like men to the last.

Three of our remaining guns were serviceable, and powder was brought up from the magazine for a few charges; after which, to avoid any additional calamity that might arise in the search for plunder, we drowned the remainder, except a cartridge we brought up in hand. As to saving baggage, or indeed any thing but our lives, we entertained no hopes. We opened our trunks, which had all been deposited in the magazine, to obtain what money each contained. In this scramble the box of the unfortunate widow, in which was cash to the amount of nearly one hundred pounds, totally escaped our recollection,

having been placed in a corner out of observation.

Even in this awful state of our affairs, that pitiful maniac, Captain Hawkins, continued to torment himself and us, with threats for our mutiny and disobedience! He had been scribbling the whole of this unhappy day, and seemed intent alone on preserving himself and his writings, indifferent to the loss of property, which now appeared inevitable, or even to the risk of life. All I could muster was twelve joes in gold, and a few dollars in silver; with these in my pocket, with my pistols, and the sword of my respected general, I re-ascended the deck, calmly prepared to meet whatever fate Providence might decree.

The clouds of night already gathered around us. Williams, with my other associates, assisted in loading the guns: we fired one each minute for a few rounds; then ceased, and threw our guns overboard; chopped the anchors from the cat-head; got up as many of the water-butts as we could, and started their contents; they were then lashed together by *threes;* the topmasts were

unfidded and lowered: we then turned her head for the low sandy beach, right before the wind, under the mainsail. After half an hour's agonising anxiety as to the fate that awaited us in this last and desperate attempt, we got into shoal water.

Although we had screwed up our minds to the very sticking-place of courage, to meet the shock of striking, when that awful moment arrived, and the bold Tom shouted out "Hauld hard, all hands, she stroikes!" a general cry followed the shock—many were knocked down; even those who felt themselves most secure by holding on by the rigging, were lifted off their legs by the violence of the first stroke, from which the vessel rose, and on the top of a long shoal wave, assisted by the wind, gained a couple of hundred feet, before her keel made a second and final bed in the hard unyielding strand!

We had scarcely been fixed a minute, when the foremast came tumbling aft, threatening destruction to all within its vortex. The broken water roared over the shallow on every side! The piercing cries f the poor women and chil-

dren rent our hearts, while we still felt it our duty to chide their clamor.

Rising above this war of sounds, the loud and distinct voice of the unsubdued Northern made itself be heard. The ship had taken a partial and unsteady heel to starboard, to which side the wreck of the foremast inclined in its fall. All the passengers were huddled together to larboard on the quarter-deck; but the ever-watchful Tom, perceiving that another heave of the sea would change her position, ordered us all as far aft as we could stow ourselves, while with the remainder of the crew he was employed in clearing a passage for the wreck of the falling foremast. A lofty ground-swell threw the hull of the vessel with a sudden shock on her larboard bulge, when the foremast thundered over the lee-side with a horrid crash, sweeping in its ruin an unfortunate serjeant of the Royal Irish Artillery, who had just crawled up from his berth, as it were to court that death he had so instantly encountered. One wild and piteous shriek, the howl of his native country, was all he uttered: the next moment he was no more!

The passage from the quarter-deck to the fore-

castle could only be performed with difficulty; but it was more than once traversed by the adventurous mate, with the humane intent of rousing the sleeping drunkards, whose voice we at length heard forward, in noisy altercation with that unhappy-minded man, Captain Hawkins, who in the confusion of the moment had gone to the head of the ship, when she first struck, to look out.

He was now completely in the power of those who could have wreaked their ready vengeance on him; but British sailors were never known to be assassins. Sobered by the dangers of the scene, these men employed themselves in lashing together such coops and empty casks as were within their reach, while the remainder of the crew were engaged in similar precautions abaft.

The violent striking of the ship on the sand threatened every moment to stave in her side; the fate of the poor invalids, the women, and the children, in the event of such a calamity, was the most afflicting consideration. The moon broke forth in brilliant splendor; the tide was at its height; and our eyes were fondly bent towards that shore, to reach which, even naked and outcast, was the prayer of all.

We could discern some lights glimmering in the distance, cheering, perhaps, some circle of happy holiday folks, whose joyous revels the thoughts of such a scene as ours did not cloud. We contrived to lower the main-yard, and by great exertion lashed it athwart-ship; our mainmast stood as firm as the forest oak, and the resistance of the vessel to the repetition of such constant and heavy shocks proved the integrity of her northern build; she held together as if composed of one entire mass of timber.

Our bell remained pendant and uninjured: we called out to the men forward to sound the dismal note of distress, while with the aid of the cartridge we had preserved we let off "devils," as they are called, of moistened powder every quarter of an hour. In this way we passed the dreadful night which ushered in the new year of ninety-eight.

Before midnight an awful stillness prevailed, which to many appeared the harbinger of coming death; it was however of happier omen. The sea subsided by degrees into languid heavings, and at length settled into a dead and peaceful calm. Some time after twelve the lately brilliant moon sunk into leaden paleness, and on all sides

Night's candles were burnt out.

Darkness and the chilling gloom of a wintry midnight hung over the deep; but every heart felt that the brighter beam of Divine mercy had lighted on us in the last hour of our heavy trial.

The tide in its reflux and return scarcely rippled the surface of our shoally berth. During the night, the three forecastle-men, trusting to their raft, launched themselves off at low water, and happily reached the shore in safety. Long before day broke, the twinkling light of several lanterns approaching the wreck, assured us that succour was at hand: the winds of heaven seemed hushed to silence during this vital moment. Four boats came in succession alongside, not as inhuman wreckers, but as friends to the forlorn and distressed.

The first impulse of our joyous hearts was to utter a spontaneous cry of thanksgiving to our Divine and Merciful Protector; after which our efforts were immediately directed to collecting the poor women and helpless little innocents that yet survived our misfortunes, and place them with safety in the boats. This was happily effected by

the help of the gratings, which, lashed together, formed a safe platform.

Two boats loaded with the feeble and the helpless had already put off for the shore; the officers made their way into the third; on taking our places in which, the insane captain thought it right to enter his protest against us all, and authoritatively remarked, "Gentlemen, you will recollect I do not waive my command; I consider you all under arrest." The fourth boat yet remained for its freight. Of the crew all had gone off but Bateman, one of the boys, and one steady Dane. No inducement could tempt honest Tom to quit the hull of the Ellison while it stuck together, nor would the boy or the faithful Dane consent to leave him to perish alone.

To press the hand of a brave and honest seaman I shall ever deem an honor, and before we cast off I sprung up the slanting deck, on which the lion-like Tom held his uncertain footing, and seizing his rough and weather-tanned hand, said, "Bateman, the squeeze of the hand from such a noble-hearted fellow is worthy a king's acceptance—farewell, brave soul! God give us a

happy meeting, for we all owe our lives to you!"

Tom, who was evidently melted, but not unmanned, fervently answered, "Awmen! awmen! You aund oye mout haw sailed round the woorld, and never haud no words of contrariness. And as for that theere poor leeftenant as went overboard wi' our d—(God forgive me! whaut waus oye a gowing to say?) our *poor little coptain*, whoy he was a troomp too, and loike yourself woorked hank for hank wi' the best mon o' the ship. But as for that theere mad coptain, aul oye sauy is a clear berth from him—aunly for he, we shoold naw haw haud the *dommed blaucks* aboard; it waur a heavy hoor we shipped 'em. This poor Ellison is naut mouch harmed: if we can get her off at the springs, well aund good, if naut, woorse luck; bout oy 'll stick boye her, an do moy obleegation. So naw, God bless you, coptain, an' a happy meeting wi' all at home!"

We were soon off; and as I surveyed the situation of the vessel in the grey morning's light, I felt additional claims on my gratitude to Heaven for our preservation. The fourth boat remained with the salvagers. We had rather a long row

to the shore: the beach shoaled out to the distance of a mile or more; and when our boat grounded, my impatience would not permit me to be carried on shore in my turn, on the back of one of the boatmen. I jumped into the water, nearly hip-deep, and wading to the beach, hurried to an unobserved spot, where, falling on my knees, I uttered, in all the thankfulness of an adoring and grateful heart, my humble acknowledgments to our Creator and Preserver,

Whose hands prepared the dry land.

On joining my comrades, we made up a purse for the boatmen, amounting to two guineas each boat, and accompanied by the men, women, and children, marched in a body to the nearest village. The poor dear little ones, unconscious of their late perils, no sooner felt their safe footing on shore than they gambolled about, throwing snowballs, and heedless of the piercing cold.

Whilst all the rest were rejoicing at our providential escape from death, enjoying every trifling incident on our march as a happy occurrence, Captain Hawkins stalked on in gloomy silence, seemingly wrapt in feelings of wounded pride and

offended honor. His repeated expression of "*You may laugh, gentlemen! but by and bye you 'll find it no laughing matter!*" although, at the moment it increased our mirth, proved but too prophetic of our future trouble.

On reaching the village we made the necessary arrangements for passing on the invalids, the women, and children in waggons, during the preparation for which they one and all received the kindest attention, with the aid of some warm clothing from the pitying inhabitants.

During our walk towards the nearest post-town, where those, in companionship with me, intended that we should take a post-coach for London, we offered the hand of good fellowship, and oblivion of all past differences, to our late mess-mate, Hawkins, who had so unexpectedly assumed the commanding officer over us; but he remained silent and inexorable.

CHAPTER XXIV.

———Could great men thunder
As Jove himself does, Jove never would be quiet;
For every paltry, petty officer,
Would use his heaven for thunder!

THE welcome sight of London put us all in spirits; but we were obliged to keep house until we could equip ourselves with habiliments fit for the street; for, strange to say, the officers of either service, to whom the family of the Bulls are indebted for a country to live in, and for the use of streets to walk in, would be hustled about, followed, mobbed, and stared at, should they dare to appear in the livery of honor. Three days had passed before we were all equipped so as to be able to report our arrival in person at the adjutant-general's office; where, greatly to our amazement, we found

that *charges of a most serious nature* had been preferred against the whole five of us, by that mischievous maniac, Captain Hawkins, and against me particularly as the *primum mobile* of the mutiny.

Our astonishment and indignation were almost lost in the feeling of ridicule, which, in spite of our annoyance, we could not but indulge at this communication; but the deputy adjutant-general seemed to view it in a very serious way.

The subsequent experience of thirty years has convinced me that there is nothing too ridiculous in the nature of *accusation* not to be treated in a serious way at the Horse Guards, War Office, or Treasury; and not any thing half so difficult as to obtain attention to, or redress of a real grievance!

"The whole affair," said this official soldier, (What AFFAIR?) "was under the consideration of the commander-in-chief, and until his Royal Highness's commands were communicated thereon, we would be *pleased* (!) to consider ourselves in open arrest!"

"LONG LIFE TO LUNACY!" I exclaimed, as with my four inculpated companions I counted

the stone steps of the two flights of the adjutant-general's stairs, and thought on that one extraordinary flight of our mad captain, which placed us in this unpleasant predicament.

To find him out and pummel him to death was our first determination, but happily not followed up. After a variety of projects, in which no two of us agreed, we at length hit upon one resolution, which was carried unanimously; namely, to adjourn to the old military house of call, the Cannon, in Cockspur Street, (which formerly stood nearly opposite Spring Gardens,) to dinner, after which we could talk over our grievances. In the course of the evening we fortunately fell in with a surgeon, to whom two of our party had been known in the West Indies, and to him we told our whole story.

He was a shrewd, cool, clear-headed Scotchman. After patiently hearing us out, he asked us what we meant to do; and on receiving for answer that we knew not, he invited the whole of us to call on him next morning, AFTER breakfast, at his lodgings in Suffolk Street, (the Scotch Barracks, as it was termed in those days,) to

receive his *opeenion* and *adveese*, both of which, to his credit, he bestowed with equal good sense and feeling.

We accordingly drew up under his correction a statement of our voyage, and all its occurrences, not sparing our accuser, Captain Hawkins, whose conduct we fully described; the fidelity of which statement in every particular we expressed our readiness to verify on oath. This was duly presented: we received a cold, formal official letter in reply, stating that our DEFENCE should be submitted for consideration.

After six weeks' mortification and delay it was notified to us, "that although our conduct in resisting the authority of Captain Hawkins, our senior officer, was reprehensible, and subversive of that good order and discipline so essential for the good of his Majesty's service in all situations; yet, under all the circumstances, his Royal Highness did not feel it necessary to institute further proceedings, trusting that the *lenity* thus exercised towards us would have its due effect on all the parties implicated in those acts of insubordination, which his Royal Highness

had been so forcibly called on to notice and condemn."

This precious document, signed by the secretary of that day, was handed about all the military tables in town, and there was but one opinion on its absurdity and injustice: but, as if to put to shame the judgment of the secretary and his royal master, this same rigid defender of discipline—this said captain—proved his insanity by going one day to the Horse Guards vociferously demanding a majority; and being obliged to be removed by force, he SHOT HIMSELF under the roof of that building in which his scandalous and groundless complaints against five innocent and honorable young men had been so eagerly received and fostered! Had the press of that day been so unfettered and bold as it is at present, we should not have sat down under such an insult so quietly.

One of the party, Lieutenant Harvey Powell, immediately sold out, and in his rage and disgust at the treatment he had received, betook himself to his native county in Ireland; where, during the unhappy rebellion of that year, he rendered his

name terrible by the daring activity of the insurgent corps which he commanded.

All the fine qualities of his manly and generous heart gave way to a feeling of desperate and deep-rooted revenge. His brief career of crime was marked by unusual atrocity exercised against the king's troops, whenever the chance of war favored him; and he at length fell in the field at New Ross, after almost annihilating the regiment of militia immediately opposed to his brigade of rebels, and while cheering his men to fresh slaughter. He fought and fell with a bravery worthy of a better cause; and this man was lost to his Majesty's service, from the miserable folly of persons in power listening to the unsupported and incredible tales of a mischievous maniac.

Full three months had passed before we could obtain the compensation allowance for the loss of baggage; and it was in my search for documents to support these claims that I obtained, through the ship's agent, a clue to the brave Tom Bateman. The succeeding tide having been attended with much wind and sea, he, with his two companions, were compelled to quit the wreck; but in the course of a few days the hull was safely

got afloat. On reaching town he made the usual protest, which contained such a complete corroboration of our statement to the Horse Guards, that had we been aware of its existence at the time, it would have proved a most valuable document. Late as it was, however, we had an attested copy formally presented to the secretary at the Horse Guards; a trouble which we might have spared ourselves, as the circumstances to which it related had escaped his memory, and he would not take upon himself to bring under revision a case on which his royal chief had already given a final opinion.

After much search, we found honest Tom at the Ramilies public-house in Wapping, undergoing the most tormenting cross-examination of two pettifogging limbs or excrescences of the law, employed in exercising all their low ingenuity to entrap and puzzle Tom into a self-refutation of his protest, with a view, of course, to furnish some advantage to the underwriters. The unexpected sight of our party cheered Tom's spirits; but his shaven face and trimmed hair, long-skirted coat, red waistcoat, velveteen breeches, and blue stockings, had so altered his whole appearance, that it re-

quired a careful investigation of his countenance to recognise in that sober-looking personage the romantic-looking, rugged tar, whom, once seen in his original attire, it was impossible ever to forget.

The certificate which we left for him at our first port, which set forth his exertions and undaunted perseverance for the preservation of the vessel to the last, was of infinite service to Tom, who had already got a berth in a south-seaman preparing to sail in the following May.

We had subscribed for the purchase of a watch, which we took the opportunity of presenting to him before the pettifoggers, as an acknowledgement for his fidelity and honesty in the discharge of all his duties, and for his skill and care of the ship Ellison, so long as that unfortunate vessel could swim.

Tom made his homely but honest acknowledgements for our kind recollection of him; and on taking our leave, which we did not do until we had put the harpies to flight, the poor fellow's heart was in his mouth. He gripped our hands one after the other, and after giving us a hearty seaman's blessing, he added, "And nauw for the Lord's sake *never hauve nothing to do wi* DOMMED

BLAUCKS, whenever yee gaw to sea again."—Tom certainly did not belong to the society of "LES AMIS DES NOIRS."

My mind dwelt with pain on the recent Horse Guards' transactions. I reflected on what a slight thread a man's fame, his fortune, and honor, depended, when any mischief-making blockhead, or long-headed scoundrel could whisper away the character of the gentleman or the soldier, under an affected zeal for the honor and discipline of his Majesty's service. I had the prudence however to confine my opinions to my own breast; for just at that moment I had a favor to request, namely, an extension of my leave of absence; and of which, after much correspondence, I could only obtain an addition of six weeks. My regiment, composed of negroes fresh from the African coast, had not yet reached five hundred in number: it was assembled at St. Lucie, a place only fit for Blacks! I wrote in the depth of low spirits to my ever warm friend, the Dublin army-agent, for his advice. He proposed two plans;—one to purchase into the Buffs, in which regiment their house had a company for sale, which, with the value of my captain-lieutenancy, could be ob-

tained for seven hundred pounds;—the other plan was to endeavour to get placed on half-pay; in which case my friend promised a company in a regiment of fencible infantry, then raising in the north, which, together with the adjutancy, should be secured to me for a comparatively small sum, by which my rank in the army would not be lost. As for the first, I knew the inconvenience, not to say impossibility of my father's providing such a sum at a moment's notice, being a man of expense, with a large family, and one of the worst of economists, even in that thriftless country. Neither could I reconcile it to myself to think of involving him in any security for prospective payment. That plan was therefore declined at once; and the second, as the more tempting, as well as feasible one, was entitled to consideration. My applications for permission to retire on half-pay were met by the most peremptory refusals; but the unexpected intelligence arrived of the reduction of three of the junior West India regiments, by which I was, much to my satisfaction, shelfed in regular order with some dozens of brother-soldiers whose prospects were not so cheering.

Just at this period kind fortune sent over to London my friend the agent, through whose exertions, aided by the powerful recommendation of Earl Moira, the plan he had proposed for my appointment to the —— Fencibles was completely and satisfactorily carried into effect. I shall not here stop to render the full tribute of my gratitude and respect to that most amiable and excellent man. Should my poor work, however, ever arrive at the honor of a second series, his name will find a distinguished place in my memoirs.

Earl Moira was, at that period, at open war with the ministry, partly on account of the scandalous breach of faith practised against the poor French emigrants, and which his lordship, in his place in the House of Peers, did not scruple to stigmatise in the strongest terms of indignant reprobation. But his most recent and unpardonable offence in the eyes of the Premier was presiding at the Fox dinner, when that obnoxious toast "Our SOVEREIGN—the MAJESTY of the PEOPLE!" excited such a stir in the political world, and made every official head from the Throne to the Treasury clerk ache and throb for its safety. The pitiful minister of the day infused a portion of

his own terrors into the breast of his royal master, whose soul was heretofore a stranger to the sensation of fear. Amongst its other consequences, this popular toast lost old Norfolk the favor of his sovereign, the lieutenancy of the county of York, and the colonelcy of the West Riding militia. There was a caricature published on this occasion, which caused a great sensation, inasmuch as the mind of the public at large was warmly expressed in favor of the offending nobles, and equally violent in its reprobation of the ministry: indeed there never was a period when the chief magistrate of this mighty country and his servants were in worse odour.

The picture to which I allude represented his Majesty on his throne; from behind which "Billy Pitt" (as he was then termed by the multitude) with *his* friend and prime-minister, Old Nick, on his shoulder, was seen peeping, and thrusting his mouth towards the royal ear. On each side of the throne were ranged the favorites of the day: on the right stood the late Lord Salisbury, dressed in the jacket and helmet-cap of the Hertford militia: on the left, the late Earl of Uxbridge, as a grenadier of the Stafford militia. At the foot of

the throne stood the Duke of Norfolk in the act of placing in his Majesty's hand his commission, holding in an elevated position his baton of hereditary marshal of England in proud defiance; while his memorable words on that occasion appeared to issue from his mouth; viz.

"Your Majesty has not a more loyal subject in your dominions."

The broadest license which the pencil of the caricaturist could dare to indulge in was adopted by the ever licentious Bunbury in the print alluded to, of which thousands were daily sold.

Having now several weeks' spare time, and being desirous of some repose after all my late anxieties, I projected a visit to my Newbury friends, the Hailstones; but a little reflection induced me to abandon that scheme, and take my chance for recruiting my health and spirits by a sojourn in Bath for a few weeks. After closing all my affairs with the liberal house of Cox and Greenwood, I had the satisfaction of finding myself in ample funds for the indulgence of my wishes, and left town at that portion of the year which is called, amongst the fashionable world, the high season, taking my seat unostentatiously enough

on the box of the Bath and Bristol day-coach. As our heavy vehicle slowly wound its way up Speenhill, I cast a fond look on the well-wooded farm of my respected friends, and bestowed a silent but heartfelt wish for the happiness of its beloved inmates.

The signs of every road-side alehouse, and the very milestones on this road, were familiar to my recollection: nothing seemed altered since I had passed and repassed three years before. The ruddy, sunburnt peasant children were, as usual, paddling about the doors of each well-remembered cottage, or roaming the fields in pursuit of the butterfly, or gathering the first flowers of a late but lovely spring. Each of these joyous groups had their home and their affections; while I felt myself a homeless wanderer—one whom Nature had apparently created for the enjoyment of domestic happiness, but whom fate had destined to a life of change and care. Of my profession I had hitherto experienced few of the sweets, but much of the misery; yet in the midst of them I had discharged my humble duty with honorable repute. And what was my reward?—to be all but sacrificed, after my escape from war, pesti-

lence, and shipwreck, by a ridiculous accusation, which a sensible and impartial inquiry would have dismissed with indignant contempt!

On our coach stopping at my once gay quarters at ******m for tea, no longer tenanted by the loyal landlord of former days, I inquired for mine host of the Hart and his two pretty daughters, and was informed that he, poor fellow! had found a refuge in the county lunatic asylum as a pauper; that one of his daughters became barmaid at a fashionable inn at Bath, and the youngest had gone to London to seek her fortune;—*that* fortune may be written in a sentence of sorrow! So much for the unrequited loyalty of poor Bradley!

CHAPTER XXV.

Men, with their heads, reflect on this and that;
But women with their hearts, or—heaven knows what!

THE day after my arrival at the celebrated city of Bath, then and always beautiful, I read an advertisement to the following effect, which, as retirement was my object, I lost no time in replying to; and it will be seen that I must have possessed no common share of vanity to assume to myself so many good qualities as those required by the advertisers: videlicet—

"Country Lodgings.—A respectable gentleman under thirty, of good education, pleasing manners, unexceptionable *moral* character, and of social habits, may be accommodated with board and lodging in a small family in independent circumstances, residing in a comfortable house a few miles distant from this city, (Bath) whose object is solely to add to their society a person whose manners would be found agreeable and

creditable to their acquaintance.—Address, A. Z., at Mr. Crutwell's, Herald Office."

It must be needless to observe that such an invitation did not remain unnoticed. A dozen of letters were received in reply, of which I was subsequently favored with a perusal. I perceived that I did not stand alone in that pleasing delusion—a good opinion of oneself, the greater number of letters for the promised comfort being filled with descriptions of the peculiar excellency of temper, talents, and persons of the writers.

As for myself, I wrote two lines referring to a branch of the worthy farmer Hailstone's family, residing at Bristol, for their opinion as to my claim to the character whose society the advertiser sought.

I could not have presumed, with the slightest pretension to modesty, to say of myself any thing half so flattering as those good friends to whom I referred would say of me. I therefore went on the surest grounds, and was selected as the inmate, to the exclusion of all other candidates.

In the course of three or four days every thing was arranged; and, furnished with my directions, I set forth about nine in a fine May morning for my place of destination, to which one of Pick-

wick's post-chaises rattled me in less than half an hour.

The servant girl who opened the outer gate on my descending from the carriage cast a penetrating glance on my whole face and person, as if she was hereafter to become my jailer, and feared to lose one lineament of my countenance. The senior Abigail, who held the hall-door in hand—a good-looking but demure damsel of about thirty—was not a jot less curious or observant than the junior. Passing into the hall, I saw an object in advance in female garb, apparently waiting to receive me. This, thought I, must be Mrs. Alpha and Omega herself; so advancing, hat in hand, to make my bow of self-introduction, I was favored by a reception at once formal and civil, but intended to be politely reserved. The lady ushered me into a spacious back parlour opening on a lawn. The beauties of the apartment redeemed the character of the house in my estimation, which at first appearance bore a strong resemblance to those select asylums where nervous ladies or gentlemen are kindly incarcerated by the humanity of their expectant relatives or friends, in order to be

worried to death by an excessive care of their health, spirits, and persons.

The rear of the mansion was really beautiful; but there was an old-maidish neatness and precision in the arrangements of this apartment which I could not associate with the agreeable-looking personage who stood before me—a brunette of about eight-and-twenty; a pair of brilliant black eyes, flashing fire in their momentary revolutions, almost depriving me of the power of analysing the other features of her very striking countenance. The next point of attraction was her teeth; for the display of which Nature, as if proud of the beautiful production, had left the casket "half open to view." With such eyes and such a mouth, it was almost a matter of indifference what kind of nose intervened. So that there *was* a nose, the most fastidious in beauty ought to be satisfied. The upper and lower parts of the face would have atoned for any deformity short of the actual deficiency of the nasal promontory; but even this, when admiration could be spared and subdivided, must claim its full share. It fortunately escaped being *long*; but it

was a goodly-sized feature, and would have given dignity to the countenance if the owner were not such an eternally restless, bustling kind of character, that every feature partook of her natural activity. Although I presented her a chair on our first entrance, and placed one for myself, I could not bring her to seat herself for one moment; nor would my politeness suffer me to repose while she bustled about the room, removing into the air a number of delicate plants which were arranged in this fragrant room.

It was not yet ten o'clock, but the lady hostess seemed dressed for the day or the occasion. The junior maid-servant appeared to announce breakfast while I was lending my aid to the mistress in the arrangement of the flower-pots, when I took the liberty of offering the lady my hand, to lead her to the breakfast-room, according to etiquette; but she withdrew the hand which I had taken with respectful action, as if there was contagion in the touch of mine; and by one of her extraordinary looks, which expressed a chapter, she seemed to say, "What do you imagine the maid would think, to see me give my hand to a young man the first quarter of an hour we had ever seen each other?"

Had she said this and more, the words could not have expressed her sentiments more powerfully than the comprehensive flash of her speaking eye. I followed in silence, bowing submissively to her "No thank you, Sir." Some ladies know themselves better than any one else; and if they are composed of combustible materials, they are right to avoid the application of the match to the train as long as—possible. The breakfast-table abounded in all that was good and proper for the occasion, but exhibited rather too great a display of plate.

The sounds of a footstep, slowly and cautiously approaching, which appeared to be accompanied by the noise of a stick or crutch, prepared me for the entrance of a gouty plethoric husband; but what was my surprise when, on the opening of the door, I beheld hobbling into the room a personage, whom at first sight I might have mistaken for Time's eldest son! He marched, or rather halted, (if I may be allowed the military paradox,) into the room, apparently unobservant of all, until he arrived at his chair at the top of the table; when, previous to sitting down, he held his extended hand in front of his bald and wrinkled

brow, to create a shade, and then casting his looks on me, inquired in a shrill and hollow tone of voice, "Patty, is this the captain?"—"Yes, *my dear*," answered the lady in quite as high a key; and addressing me, said, "Mr. Sinnot, captain." The old man kindly held forth his hand to me, who had of course risen on his entrance, and heartily shaking it, cried, "Sitee down, sitee down, thee bee'st welcome." I replied in good set terms of civil acknowledgement; which drew from Time jun. the following remark: "Naighbour Hailstone said as how thee bee'st Irish! why, thee speak'st English as well as we;" a compliment I could only reply to by a half-denying bow, and obeying his injunctions, took my seat. I helped the lady to a slice of a cherry-colored gammon of Wiltshire bacon, worth its weight in dollars, to which she did ample justice. Had I been her lover, the performance of my hostess on the cold gammon might have gone far to assuage the warmth of my passion; but, as my countryman said, "I was but a lodger."

Our breakfast passed off with much good-humor on all sides, and I was requested to introduce a certain dark personage into the parlour,

whom I take some shame to myself for having so long omitted to bring to my reader's recollection, although he had been in constant attendance on me during the last half-year;—this was no other than the negro lad, Jean Baptiste, who had been so nearly immolated to the wrath of the superstitious Bateman. I took him on to London with me as valet, and had put him into livery. With all the vanity of his race, he had suffered his woolly fleece to grow to its extremest length, in order to tie it up into something like the semblance of a tail or queue: to effect which, these poor creatures twist together several distinct locks, which from time to time they combine, and from the whole concoct a short and bushy tuft, which, from its comparative length, they imagine destroys their identity as the mere woolly-headed coast negro. Poor souls, what an ambition! Baptiste, who had lately thinned the whole of his front crop, and condensed seven tails into three of promising length, preparatory to their future junction, was called into the breakfast-parlour, in order to be exhibited to the lady and gentleman. After his skin, face, hands, and eyes, had undergone due scrutiny, and called forth those *acute* and *sen-*

sible expressions of astonishment so peculiar to the British; such as, "*Dear me!*" "*Indeed!*" "*You don't say so?*" "*Well, I 'm sure!*" &c. his trio of tails became an object of mirthful attention with the lady and the junior maid-servant, and of deep inquiry to the senior, who was what is called *serious*, and whose starch face had been insinuated through the half-open parlour door.

"What 's the meaning of these?" inquired the lady, as she gently touched the frizzly tip of one, as if she feared it would sting her.

"These, Madam"— I answered hesitatingly, "O! these are—but I suppose you have read of bashaws of three tails?"

"O! yes, Sir, in 'Blue Beard!'" quickly replied the lady.

"Exactly, Madam, exactly! Well, then, this Mr. Baptiste is, in his own country, a bashaw, and these are his tails of rank!"

"Indeed!" said the lady, withdrawing her hand from the tuft with a look of infinite disappointment and incredulity. It was a ticklish subject, and I had no desire to push the explanation further; but as Baptiste, who was a very good-looking and *perfect* negro, made his salaam, Ma-

dam, who had scanned his person as a sculptor would study his model, pronounced him to be "a very *nice* man!"

The poor fellow was to leave me the next day, having procured him a place with a gentleman going back to the West Indies. As a servant he was quite an incumbrance to me; and, although he heartily disliked the country, and was constantly repining at his lot of—freedom, the thought of parting from a master who had been so indulgent to him, cost him many a tear.

Breakfast over, the old gentleman, with frank independence of manner, opened on business; and drawing me near to him, as if I had been as dull of hearing as himself, cried out, "You must know that my dame and I sees very little company, and we find our time hang heavy at nights. (She does I dare say, I thought, as I shook my head, and looked at the lady.) 'So,' says my dame, says she, 'suppose we have some quiet kind of a gentleman to live *wi* us, and keep us alive, play a hand o' cards, and tell us what 's a going on in foreign parts, and all that.' Well, we gets the marquis's surveyor to draw up an *advertizement*, and we sends it to Bath, and so now

you be come, you be heartily welcome; but mind—I goes to bed every night at ten o'clock, and we must all go to roost at the same time. I like quietness now, tho'f I were the devil of a rackety chap when a young one. Now you know our ways, I hope we'll agree."

The old man having concluded his speech, the lady took up the unfinished *exposé*. "It is true, captain, as *my dear* says, that we see little company except our near neighbours, but we take in the Bath and Reading newspapers, and subscribe to the circulating library; so that you will have quite books enough to amuse you."—"That is, madam, when I am so unfortunate as to be deprived of your conversation."

"That's quite a compliment," observed the lady. "I am sure I read it in the '*Memoyers* of a Welsh Heiress.'"

"It is the language of truth, madam, wherever you have met with it."

"What do you saie?" asked the old man.

"I am inviting the captain to take a walk after he sees his room, *my dear*."

O! excellent woman—we had been brutes without thee!

The arrangements of the sleeping-rooms were thus:—the chamber of the gentleman and lady of the house was situated over the spacious back parlour; the front room on the same floor, called *par excellence* the "best," or chief drawing-room, looked out upon the fore-garden and road, besides having a commanding view of the beautiful vale of Avon, and its rich surrounding scenery. There were also smaller chambers on the other side of the grand passage for the use of occasional visitors. Directly over the chamber of the master and mistress the maid-servants were lodged; so that not a mouse could make a nocturnal excursion unheard by the keen ear of the wakeful lady. The best bed-chamber or front one on that floor was allotted for my use, and a more agreeable one cannot well be imagined. On the opposite side to mine a dormitory had been prepared for Baptiste; the gardener and general servant man, who also drove chaise, milked cows, mowed, marketed, brewed, and slept in the back kitchen. At all the windows on the ground and parlour floors were alarum bells, and a surly dog was unchained at night

and left to prowl about the premises, to the terror of thieves, gipsies and gallants.

The examination of my sleeping quarters, into which I was inducted by the lady of the house, called forth unbounded praise and thanks: I only ventured to express my regret at its distance from hers in case of any accident; but another lecture of looks admonished me that walls had ears. On descending the stairs the hand was not refused; but had her heart been as hard as that hand she must have died a maid. As she felt the touch of mine, which from my childhood was of womanish softness, she observed upon it, and holding out her own said, "These have pressed many a ton of cheese, and have held the churn-staff for hours of a morning."

Cheese, and a churn-staff! O, what a drawback on the tender passion! The cheese-pressing I might have overlooked, but the vile churn-staff—such an employment for a lady! it was out of all reason.

Our first walk was confined to the extensive garden of the house, over which I accompanied the ill-mated pair at an humble distance. The old gentleman had a huge wart, or wen, on one

of his eyelids, the size of a cherry, which so depressed it, that without throwing back his head he could not see distinctly on that side. For his greater comfort and safety, I am bound to believe, his lady invariably planted herself on the weaker point of her dear husband. The air breathed perfume; the hawthorn, blown from the boundary hedges, shed its snowy blossoms on every side, more delightful to the sense than the overpowering richness of the surfeit of sweets which poured from the well-stocked green-house, every shelf of which was covered with the rarest plants and flowers. But even sweets will cloy on reflection; I saw that the lady wished to shorten the walk, anxious I suppose to gratify her curiosity by knowing something of me and my history; but being a passive spectator and admirer of all I saw, I allowed her to choose her own time and means for dropping her aged companion. He soon saved her that trouble by reminding her of a promise to call on the postmistress of the contiguous village, who was their constant visitor, and third hand at whist, to invite her to tea that evening, and take that opportunity of introducing me.

Mrs. Sinnot disappeared, and soon after presented herself in the last new fashion, the *Camperdown* bonnet and the *Duncan* plaid scarf; and placing herself under my escort, she bid good morning to *her dear*. Baptiste, after his exhibition in the breakfast-parlour, had strolled down to the village to look about him, and had attracted so much notice, that when his master appeared every eye in the village was bent on him. Although the generality of decent persons touched their hats, and uttered that stupid word "sarvant," as the lady under my charge tripped past them, there was a certain leer on every countenance, which could not escape me.

At length we arrived at the little post-office, where a small bag is forwarded from the great road, for the convenience of the village and the neighbouring farms and collieries; and where, combined with the humble office of post-mistress, the good lady of letters had her circulating library and stock of stationary, threads, tapes, and buttons. Entering without ceremony on her side, but no small show of it on the part of the other, my lady introduced me as their guest in great form. The post-mistress, I had heard in our

short walk, was the widow of an officer; but as every common bum-bailiff and petty exciseman in the kingdom is honored with that appellation, which should alone distinguish the members of the honorable profession of arms of both services, I could only elicit a belief that her husband, who died in America many years before she became a settler in that part of the country, had been in the army. With the aid of her pension, post-office, library, and shop, Mrs. Pudish (the introduction into whose name of one letter would have made it sound the reverse of her character) contrived to live in all the respectability and comfort of her humble station. She was a gay, smirking woman of forty, rather corpulent, but with due pretensions on the score of gone-by beauty, or at least comeliness of person; her virtues were briefly summed up by my hostess in a sentence, viz. "that she made an excellent cup of tea!"

Although the parties seemed to be on the most familiar terms, I felt quite disgusted at the eternal bandying about the terms, "Yes, Me'm," and "No, Me'm," from one to the other, as evincing a total want of cordiality of feeling on either side.

The old lady—but I presume I must not call her so though turned of forty; therefore I shall say the senior—announced with apparent delight to the younger that she had discovered the solution of a charade which appeared in the last month's Lady's Magazine, and which she confessed had cost her some sleepless nights to resolve.

"Are you clever at charades, Sir?" asked the dame.

"I fear I am not clever at any thing, Madam," I replied; "but at charades particularly dull."

"O, what a pity!—well, only hear this. You know, Me'm, (addressing my brunette,) how we puzzled over it."—She read

> Domestic bustle on my first attends,
> My next has neither back, nor sides, nor ends;
> Drown but the whole, and from the fragrant tide
> Receive the purer maid—or fairer bride!

"Well, what do you think it is? I found it out entirely by myself. Do you give it up?"

"Indeed I do, Madam," said I; "I *wash my hands* of it."

The countenance of the poor woman instantly fell, and she looked as miserable as if her hus-

band, alive and well, had then walked into her little parlour.

"But, ah!" said she, (reviving,) "perhaps you knew it before?"

To compose her, I replied that perhaps I did. "Well! but what is it after all this fuss?" (peevishly inquired Mrs. Sinnot.)

"Why, a WASH-BALL! a WASH-BALL! I found it out without the slightest hint from any living being," said the charade huntress exultingly. To indulge the good lady's whim, and to set her ingenuity on a fresh scent, I proposed to write a charade, which I assured her had never been published; and looking in the face of my handsome hostess for a subject, wrote

> My first is forbidden by my second,
> But my whole is irresistible!

They were both too dull to catch at a compliment so simple; so I left the senior to expound it at her leisure, while I resolved to take my own opportunity for explaining it to the satisfaction of the junior. On returning to the house the lady merely went in for a moment to say a few endearing words to old Launcelot, while I stood on the steps in waiting to attend her on our projected walk,

As we hopped down the double step at the same moment, the serious servant cast a sour and suspicious look upon us: not so poor Baptiste; who, as he bowed us out of the front gate, grinned like an alligator, until half of his head appeared to be off; and after closing the door, he thrust his velvet nose through the narrow grating, to catch a parting glance of the well-agreed couple. During our walk I evinced so much circumspection in language and deportment, as to call forth warm compliments from my new acquaintance on my discretion—a virtue which I strongly recommend to all young men through the various ins and outs of life, whether with the old or the young, the married or the single, handsome or plain, grave or gay, free or forbidding, of the gentle sex.

During this hour's walk I received a salutary admonition for my guidance in my conduct in the presence of Mrs. Pudish. "Be careful," said my prudent hostess, "not to direct your discourse to me; bestow all your attentions on her, and on *my dear* Mr. Sinnot, for she is all eyes, ears, and tongue!" Not a word was thrown away upon me; and when the post-mistress arrived at four o'clock I acted my part to my lady's admiration, although

I had nearly spoiled all by offering the old lady my escort when her hour for retiring arrived: one flash of the overbearing eye of the hostess showed me my error, and I stood confounded. I was only relieved from the performance of my too gallant offer by the lady of the house proposing to send the usual escort, Martha, the evangelical cook, to attend, to whom I begged leave to add my blacky—an arrangement highly agreeable to all parties. After the departure of the post-mistress, the removal of the supper-table, &c. the order "you may go to bed, *child*," which was given to the bouncing lass of twenty, sent the housemaid to her nightly repose. The clock having told ten, the old gentleman, attended on by his helpmate, proceeded towards his chamber. After wishing them good night, I requested her permission to remain up, to admit the escort on their return—a trouble which she wished to spare me, or at least to share with me, after seeing her *dear* to his room.

I was left alone in the large apartment: the gardener had courted his lowly couch at sun-down, to rise with its first morning's beams; all below us was still and silent as the grave. Thirty minutes

of the forty, which it would occupy to see the post-mistress in safety to her door, had elapsed; and, by the light of my solitary taper, I sat in a great easy chair, sipping the last sweet dregs of my negus, when the indistinct sound of the footsteps of some cautious visitor stole on my ear: my heart palpitated as these sounds became more audible and near. I was in breathless expectation, when the door opening on its hinges, as if by magic movement, discovered to my view a cat! The astonished tabby stood glaring its horrid eyes upon me, as if demanding the cause of my intrusion into her usual place of repose. Of all domestic animals the cat is my abomination; and when, after a few moments' consideration, I had risen to expel the hateful object, and had bullied her like the ghost of Banquo from the scene, following her to the very threshold with my maledictions, who should appear to plead for her feline favorite but my hostess! The escort just reached the outer door as my lady, who had taken her cat to her tender arms, lightly tripped up the stairs. On giving the piebald pair admission, I instantly perceived that the pious cook had been treating the uninitiated negro to a taste

of the regenerating spirit, which, to render it the more palatable, had been qualified by an admixture of rum, sugar, and lemon. Baptiste's eyes glistened with unusual fire, and he was gallantly active in assisting Mrs. Martha in her regular duty of barring and bolting. I watched the restless looks of the sanctified seducer, convinced that she had deep designs on the heart of the boy; and, when taking my candle from her trembling hand, she scarcely met my searching scowl. My sable valet having taken his candle, the careful housewife desired him not to lock his door; "As her missis was very petticklar about lights, she would fetch his candle." The unsuspicious boy replied, "Tankee, missee, me no want candle, me leave candle at door." I saw him enter his room, and taking a peep at the premises, return with his rushlight to the lobby, and there deposit it, carefully slamming his door. What an opportunity was thereby lost for the enlightenment of one dark sinner! I lay down in my excellent bed, reflecting on one thing and another thing, until my brain became "weary of conjecture," and I dosed off with the philosophical maxim of Pangloss full on my mind, "that every *thing*

was for the best, in this best of all possible worlds."

Baptiste was at my bed-side to rouse me at seven the next morning, for the last time he should ever perform that office. The poor lad was unfeignedly affected at leaving me. On reaching the breakfast-parlour at half past eight, I perceived that the lady had been before me; but, from some unaccountable coquetishness, had fled into the garden on hearing my footsteps on the stairs. The bunch of keys lay on the unopened tea-caddy: the well-scented handkerchief dropped in her hurry, or thrown by design on the floor, gave evidences of a hasty retreat. To pursue, or not pursue, was the question:—the former of course; and having soon reached my object, the distant and respectful salutation with which I approached her inspired all her confidence. She was neatly and elegantly dressed; if any thing, rather too much so for the morning; but in the country ladies sometimes dress for all day, when desirous of showing off before visitors. She really looked *very* handsome, and I could not forbear telling her so, when at a sufficient distance from the gardener. As she divided her rich bouquet with

me, I could not but deplore the *hard* lot of that, otherwise pretty, hand, and uttered a thousand inward imprecations on the churn-staff! However, we seemed perfectly to understand each other, and to be on as good terms as if we had known each other a year; or, what is still better—a week! In the course of our chat, while waiting breakfast for old Launcelot, she informed me that she had been his wife for TWELVE YEARS! Now, as the old man could not, according to my calculation of his age, be much under seventy-five years, and the lady to all appearance scarce THIRTY, their marriage, I concluded, must have taken place under some extraordinary circumstances, which my curiosity burned to know, but which I found it premature at that stage of our acquaintance to seek to be enlightened upon.

It was the custom of the master of the house to make his appearance daily between nine and ten; and whether from his own habits of decency, or his wife's example, he certainly presented himself as one of the neatest little old men I had ever seen. His garments were all of one piece, light fawn or dove-colored cloth, coat, waistcoat, and breeches; not precisely of the quaker cut, but of

the fashion of the middle of the last century. His grey hairs were combed back, and powdered with great care, and his elaborate toilet was performed with the most scrupulous exactness every day, by the aid of a village barber, of whom he was the chief patron and support; and of whose services I determined to avail myself some day, in order to elicit from that "general directory" of the neighbourhood the history of my neighbours, and more particularly that of old Launcelot and his young brunette, his union with whom seemed so unnatural.

A jaunt to Marshfield having been proposed, I volunteered the office of charioteer; and, while the vehicle was preparing, I strolled into the garden with my host. His lameness, as he informed me, proceeded from a fracture of his thigh, some thirty years before, which, by reducing the limb, obliged him to wear a cork-heeled high shoe; but by the help of a stick he could take moderate walking exercise. For excursions and visits, he had an old-fashioned low chaise, with driving box in front for the gardener, who, on such occasions, wore a kind of livery. Taking occasion to advert to the comforts of his style of living, I expressed my wish to know on what

terms I should consider myself his guest; and from the specimen I received, took the liberty of suggesting, that if the rate of one hundred pounds per annum suited his expectations, I should feel perfectly satisfied and obliged, by being allowed to consider myself *at home* on those terms, for so long as circumstances allowed me to remain his guest. "Noee! noee!" said the old man, "we don't want to make money o' thee; half that would be quite enow; besides, you be but a poor hand at the bottle: when I was your age, odd rat it, I was a man at a drap; but you young chaps be nothing now-a-days." I was glad to have arrived at a proper understanding on so delicate a point, and patiently listened to the gay old fellow when recurring to the days of his youth and frolics. But that period of life, on which his fondest reminiscences seemed to dwell, was *sweet* forty-five, when, as he proudly boasted, his name was on the parish-books for half a dozen illegitimates. After that age he said he became more sedate, in consequence of his severe accident in the first instance, and afterwards his marriage with his nurse, who was his first cousin; "but not," added he with a significant wink of his best

eye, "before there was *good raison* for it!" chuckling at the recollection, as if proud of the unhallowed feat.

I drove the ill-assorted pair in their venerable-looking chaise to the top of Marshfield hill, the summit of which affords to my fancy one of the most extensive and magnificent prospects in England; and as that route from Bath to Bristol only causes an additional three miles' postage to the ordinary expense, I recommend it to every lover of the sublime and beautiful to make that little *détour* once in their travels, when they may enjoy a bird's-eye view of thirteen counties in England and Wales, with the whole course of the Severn, and an unbounded prospect of the Bristol Channel.

Our horse was a regular roadster, not to be moved out of his ordinary jog-trot pace, of five miles an hour, either by coaxing or by the whip, so that I could join in the conversation. The wife was particularly attentive to her husband's comfort, buttoning his single-breasted coat to the throat as we ascended into the elevated regions of Marshfield: her entreaties to *her dear* to protect himself against the keen air on the hill were to

my mind rather overdone; and, with the mother of Hamlet,

Methought the lady did protest too much.

But the old fellow's vanity increased with his dotage. We called at the post-office on our return homewards, and without dismounting received the civilities of Mrs. Pudish and some ladies of the neighbourhood, who had paid a morning visit to that queen of gossips. Censoriousness and scandal are the crimes of country towns and villages, and the more contracted the sphere, the more inveterate the calumny. Every eye was directed towards the stranger, of whom it may be presumed Dame Pudish had drawn a favorable picture, after my extremely polite attentions to her the preceding evening. The sight of the group seemed to inspire old Launcelot with unusual gaiety; he passed off some not very chaste or delicate compliments upon the party, at which Mrs. Pudish chuckled, and cried "oh fie!" while the wife assumed a severity of visage which ill became her pretty face. I could perceive a giggle and sneer on the countenance of the fair listeners, which was not lost on my hostess; but who, with

apparent cordiality, invited the whole party, (about half-a-dozen,) to tea the following Sunday; in order, as she stated, to make me acquainted with her friends. After a quick but silent consultation of looks, (although no two of the parties were related, or controlled by each other's opinions or actions,) the invitation was ceremoniously accepted.

Two or three of the party were bordering on ancient virginity; the rest were hearty-looking, blooming country girls, the daughters of opulent farmers, who, in those days of prosperity, first began to step out of their sphere—a false step, which they have never been able to retrace.

The old fellow on parting insisted on shaking hands with the young lasses; and on wishing them "good bye," exclaimed, "Ah! God be wi' sweet five and forty!—drive on, James." This mistake caused general laughter, with the exception of Mrs. Sinnot. Old Launcelot loaded me with unnecessary apologies for his forgetfulness, which afforded me a fair opening for complimenting, in no measured terms of flattery, the beautiful cause of the blunder; but the lady was rather snappish, although the term *my dear* was repeated *ad*

nauseam. The horse drew up to the door without check, and I instantly dismounted from my box to assist the lady; which task was an easy one, as the steps fell almost to the ground, for the convenience of old Sinnot, to whom she never allowed any person but herself to give their personal aid. I saw no more of her until dinner-time: indeed, had the day alone been twenty-four hours long, her busy, bustling nature would have found occupation for every moment of the time; from the hour she descended from her chamber to that in which she retired to it for the night, she was eternally on the stir. The garden, the kitchen, the store-room, pantry, wash-house and dairy, were under her personal surveillance: she was worth ten pounds a year to any servant for the value of her lessons (not always conveyed in the gentlest terms); on the culinary art, and in the higher branches of housewifery, was the very princess of the art of pickling, preserving, pastry, and wine making—to say nothing of *cheese* and the churn-*staff!*

As we had not Mrs. Pudish to pass the evening, we proposed between dinner and tea a walk to the junction of the roads, in order to see my

black, Baptiste, mount the Bristol stage. The poor fellow, who had no more idea of a trunk than a foot soldier, had stowed away his kit in a kind of wallet, with which, slung over his shoulders, he descended the steps of his late good quarters with grateful thanks for the kindness he had received. I placed two guineas in his hand as the last mark of my favor he was ever destined to receive, at which he sobbed and whined so as to affect me exceedingly; while, as he stood hat in hand, the lady with eyes firmly fixed on his three erect little tails, I dare say once more thought incredulously of my explanation of the *bashaw*. At the same time the pious queen of the kitchen, Mrs. Martha, stood with undisguised anguish, taking a farewell look of her dark disciple of the true faith of her sect and sex; inwardly grieving at the perils his unenlightened soul (and body) were exposed to in this world of wickedness.

The boy, affected only at parting from me, his benefactor, trudged before us until the stage-coach came in sight, then kissing my hand a dozen times, the poor fellow took his weeping leave of me, and, perched on the back-seat of the

vehicle, I could perceive his round black face turned to catch a last look of his beloved "massa."

The lady seemed buried in her own thoughts, and I was equally silent. Poor Baptiste! after tasting the sweets of British freedom, anxious to *escape* from it! to embrace his former state of slavery! it was a thought which gave rise to a host of reflections. After some moments of musing silence, my fair companion at length broke forth, "Are all bashaws black like Baptiste?"—"No, my dear Mrs. Sinnot, some are as fair, if not fairer than myself."

"Indeed!" said she, eyeing me all over.

"But have they such nasty frizzly hair as Baptiste?"

"O no; they shave their *heads* and wear long beards."

"Well, now, if that 's the case, they can't have the kind of tails you told us of."

I clearly saw that I had got too deep a reasoner to contend with, and knowing that I had got the wrong end of the argument, proceeded to disabuse her fancy by plain fact, "Why, the truth is, my dear Mrs. Sinnot—would that I dare call you Patty!"

"And why not when we are by ourselves?" she answered, carefully looking around her.

"Well, then, my adored, my lovely Patty."

"O, Sir, I did not allow you to call me *yours*," said she, pressing up as closely to my side as if she meant to restore to a descendant of Adam the rib which our great father, Man, had contributed to the formation of his lovely partner. "Well, then, lovely, but not *my* Patty, be assured that bashaws are just as other men: as for their plurality of tails, they are merely horses' tails borne in triumph before them as marks of distinction, just as you have seen banners and flags at the Bristol election. I have myself seen a bashaw not an inch taller, and not so good-looking as your husband."

"What!" cried the lady with amazement, "as *my dear!*"—I am sure she never again thought of a bashaw but with contempt.

Two days more brought our Sunday tea-party. After attending the village church, where my strange face underwent the severest scrutiny, we dined at the early hour of half-past one, to allow of the servants attending their places of worship. The younger girl went to the unostentatious afternoon service of the parish church, the senior to

the meeting-house, where some modern Mawworm undermined every kind feeling of the heart, depraved the imagination, and inflamed the passions of his willingly-deluded hearers.

About half-past four the whole bevy appeared in the fore court, headed and marshalled by the experienced post-mistress, to whom by special orders I tendered my arm, and led into the famous back parlour. Some of the ladies were attended by their beaux, certain sheepish gentlemen, who slunk in after the ladies, as if ashamed of being seen in company with a petticoat, and who took their seats close to each other in a corner of the room, not uttering a sentence beyond a reply to the inquiries of the host and hostess after the health of their respective families. The genius of taciturnity seemed to possess the whole party for a time; but the dull silence being by degrees broken, chiefly by the ever-ready Mrs. Pudish, all the party seemed to find their tongues at once, and vie with each other in starting a topic. But the absorbing subject of the hour was the dreadful IRISH REBELLION, of the breaking out of which one of the young farmers had picked up some vague intelligence at Bristol the day before; but

Master Clod was so poor a geographer as to be unable to afford me any information as to that part of the country in which the insurrection broke forth: he was certain, however, that it was either in Dublin *or* Ireland!—an observation which called forth an ungentle reproof from his fair intended, one of the party, on his ignorance. "Bless me, Mr. Ed'ard, how you talk! don't you know that Dublin and Ireland *is* all one?" said the boarding-school-bred lady. The post-mistress by a peep into a passing newspaper caught a glimpse of the important intelligence; but still she could not satisfy those inquiries which deep anxiety for my family and others equally dear to me had prompted: this however she *could* say, that the rebels stormed the castle of Dublin, made prisoners the lord-lieutenant and his guards, and that the king had ordered all the militia, fencibles, and volunteer corps in England to be sent off immediately to Ireland, and all the *soldiers* were to remain to defend the king and parliament.

I was not the only person in company whom this intelligence affected. All the young farmers were volunteers, and they looked as serious as the

ladies did alarmed at this appalling news. A little reflection, however, satisfied both parties that such a general conscription could not be intended; and the volunteers became valiant in proportion as they became assured that their services would not be called into such dangerous employ. The maid-servant shortly appeared, bearing in her hands a tea-tray, four feet by two and a half, followed by Madam Piety with a hissing urn of water, hot as the zeal which inflamed the heart of its sanctified-looking bearer.

Tea was succeeded by a syllabub served in the summer-house of the garden, and as the evening advanced the swains became more free, the ladies less formal; so that before supper was announced (which, for the honor of country life, was served at a quarter before nine) every one seemed perfectly at their ease. This was the hour for the old man's wit and wine to flow. He had a *fling*, as he termed it, at every one of the party; and although at five his loose conversation would have been met by frowns, at nine o'clock his ribald jests and broad *double entendre* was rewarded by loud laughs and gentle "*O fies!*" One story led to another under the encouraging promptings

of the post-mistress, and while all declared they were "too bad!" all laughed and listened. Yet there were two faces at that table which partook not of the general hilarity—the hostess's and my own! She pursed her pretty mouth and knit her expressive brow, crying, "For shame, my dear!" with what I dare swear the rest of the company thought affected anger; while the seriousness that clouded my brow arose from the painful reflections on the state of my country, and the safety of my family and friends, particularly of one dear object, whose *locale* I was but too well aware was the very focus of disaffection. But, independently of these feelings, so natural to me, the vulgar mirth of the company, and the cause of it, were both foreign to my taste; and I was not sorry when twilight warned the visitors that the moment of parting had arrived. I tendered my escort to the post-mistress, having, by a telegraphic look from my hostess, learned that such an offer was agreeable to her, and it was as joyfully accepted by the gratified old lady. We took our departure in a body, my presence, I dare say, for the time, proving a protection against the scandal which all were ready to pour

out on the poor woman, whose hospitalities they had partaken of so freely.

The majority separated at the entrance of the village to pair off to their respective residences, while I jogged on with the post-mistress tucked under my arm most lovingly—on her part at least. As we had not now above two hundred yards further to walk to her dwelling, she determined to make the most of her time and occasion.

"A very good kind of woman is Mrs. Sinnot, Sir, is she not?"

"Particularly kind and amiable indeed, Mrs. Pudish."

"And you, I am sure, think her very handsome, Sir?"

"O yes, Madam, a charming young woman; and one of the best and fondest of wives I ever saw!"

"But what a pity, Captain, that she should have such an old husband?"

"That is entirely for her consideration, Madam. She really seems quite happy and contented."

"Happy, indeed!—no such thing, Sir; she can't be happy—but she *may* be happy!" said the dame, correcting herself, "if she chooses.

But, O! 'tis a sad thing to be wedded to an OLD man!" continued poor Mrs. Pudish, sighing from the very peak of her stays. "I speak from experience. Lieutenant Pudish was fifty-nine years old when, at the age of eighteen, I surrendered my hand to him, and he lived six years after!—*I* was sacrificed, Sir; but it was not so with Mrs. Sinnot."

We just arrived at her door as the church clock struck ten. I only waited until the old lady fumbled out her latch key to take my leave; but when the opening of the door was accomplished my politeness was challenged to see her safe into her home. Two minutes I thought could make no great difference, so I consented: after obtaining entrance, she closed her door, and taking me by the hand, led the way to her little parlour, where the rushlight, left by her daily attendant half an hour before, dimly burned in its lantern, making not "light—but darkness visible!" Whether from the effects of a few glasses of wine *extra*, or the *defects* of high-heeled shoes, I know not, but when about midway, poor Dame Pudish's feet suddenly failed her, and down she fell, dragging me in her vortex. I soon, how-

ever, recovered my footing, and groping about, popped my hand on an object which I at first considered a cat—my abhorrence! but, on pressure, felt it to be a wig! I directed my steps towards the glimmering taper, and at its feeble flame illumined the mould candle which stood beside it in polished brass. With this aid the wig was replaced before the fair owner could be aware that it had been defiled by the touch of man.

My next effort was to place the lady once more on the perpendicular, and then to escape her too ardent thanks for my kind attention to her under the distressing *accident*. She protested she had but half recovered herself, and entreated me to remain a few minutes until she recruited her spirits: to effect which the more speedily, she drew from her cupboard a small cruet of cogniac, of which she helped herself to a spoonful, then tendered me the cordial drop. I feared even to sip; but I was destined to taste; for the old lady, in a very fervent parting salute, gave me to understand that her liquor and her love were of the first order of strength. I rejoiced to purchase my present freedom by the promise of a future visit alone; and, to ensure it, she said, "I have

a great deal to tell you about your *beauty*:—but I see you are impatient to get home to see her black diamonds: but when you next come I'll tell you how your dear Patty became the wife of her *old uncle* Launcelot Sinnot." I stood almost riveted for a moment to the threshold; but, trembling for the consequences of delay, I took a hurried leave, and ran homewards as fast as my then active limbs allowed me; a task which did not occupy ten minutes. The unbolting and unbarring of doors was an audible hint that I had outstaid my time. From the top of the stairs I heard the voice of my hostess issue her mandate to the servant, "Take care of the lights, and go to bed, Martha!" The next moment bang went the chamber door, and shot went the lock. My slippers were placed in the hall under the marble table beneath the clock, on which stood my lighted taper. Martha the *elect* kindly stooped on her knees to place them on my feet; and while I leaned with one hand on the cold and polished stone, the other somehow or other found a resting-place on the partly uncovered shoulder of the saintly cook, the warmth of which first apprised me of its position. I know not what made me turn two or

three times to cast a glance on the daughter of faith; but recollecting that I had not thanked her, or bade her good night—civilities which her attentions claimed—I did so ere I reached the first landing-place; but in such a low tone of voice, that I scarcely reached my chamber door ere she appeared, unslippered, to ask me what it was I had pleased to ask for. Before, however, I could reply she was off like a ghost at the first glimpse of the morn, and at the same instant I heard the watchful mistress's voice crying, "Puss, puss; min, min;—Martha, are you below?"—"No, ma'am, in bed," answered the faithful, from the servants' dormitory. Slam once more went the door, and I to my bed, leaving an unbarred portal for the benefit of the cool night air, and thought no more of this naughty world until an hour after midnight, when I awoke under the influence of the night-mare.

CHAPTER XXVI.

> By heaven, Poins, I feel me much to blame,
> So idly to profane the precious time!

THE next day brought us a newspaper containing the full details of the first grand rebellious movement on the 23rd of May, and in the midst of my concern at the unhappy event, I derived some consolation at finding Mrs. Pudish's statement of the surprise of the castle and seizure of the Lord-lieutenant, &c. entirely unfounded. By the same post I had a letter from my agents, informing me that my regiment was ordered from Northumberland to the coast of Lancashire; so I contented myself to remain in my present good quarters until the arrival of the regiment at its new point of assembly.

I received a hint shortly after breakfast to hold myself in readiness to attend my hostess to Bristol, where her curiosity prompted her to go to hear all the news. My satisfaction at hearing the old gentleman decline the jaunt was greatly diminished by learning that James was ordered to be the driver on the occasion, the lady's scruples not allowing her to risk herself (or her character rather) by going such a distance unattended by the family servant in the absence of *her dear!* Mrs. Sinnot had many acquaintances at Bristol; but her visit at this time was confined to the family of one who ranked no higher than a flour-merchant or meal-man, as it is there termed, where I was doomed to hear the most absurd, but at the same time horrifying reports, which every fresh arrival from Ireland gave rise to; and I am persuaded that not the metropolis of Ireland, not any of its cities, were thrown into such a frightful state of alarm as the good city of Bristol in these days. Had the rebel Irish been on the full march from Pill the terror could scarcely have been more general. Nor was my mind much tranquillised by any intelligence I could obtain of the actual state of affairs in that

unhappy country; for the few refugees I met with consisted chiefly of women, children, and aged persons, whose arrangements for flight had been made some time before, and who had not waited for the explosion; therefore I was left in ignorance of the force, the position, and the class of commanders of the rebels; and of the important fact, whether the insurrection had that partial success so loudly insisted on by the Bristol authorities when calling all the citizens to arms.

A meeting took place at the exchange, when a loyal, that is, an unmeaning address, to the king was read, and voted by acclamation, in which the *lives-and-fortune-men* made an empty tender of both in support of his Majesty's person, crown, and dignity! This was of course followed by a loyal dinner, which was quickly got up in order to afford the good citizens an opportunity of expressing their zeal and devotion to King, Constitution, and Corporation cookery.

I must honestly confess that, except for my apprehensions for the safety of my own family and personal friends, I did not feel that intense and racking anxiety which rebellion in the land of my birth ought to have excited. It is probable

that I did not give the subject that deep consideration which, at a more advanced period of life, so awful an event would have aroused. Besides, I was leading a life of idleness and pleasure, which to a youthful mind left little room for sober reflection. Prolonging our visit until seven in the evening, we proceeded homewards, and found the old gentleman consoling himself in our absence with the company of the post-mistress and a game of cribbage.

The intelligence from Ireland poured on us in such a torrent of truth and falsehood, that I made it a point to visit Bristol every day after breakfast to read the London evening papers of the preceding day; but the important news of the defeat and dispersion of the grand rebel army in a general action at New Ross on the 5th June was first received at Bristol from Waterford in twenty hours. The opinion was that the rebellion was then crushed. Would to Heaven it had been so!

I shall ever esteem it as one of the most fortunate circumstances in my humble life that my duty did not call me into action against my unhappy countrymen, who had but too many causes

for that dreadful appeal to arms; and to which they had been as absolutely seduced and goaded by the secret encouragement of the government of the day, as by the recollection of centuries of oppression and misgovernment. I was doomed from day to day to hear the land of my birth reviled and traduced with all the virulence of vulgar clamour. Every one assumed a right to abuse Ireland and Irishmen; and it was not until I took unwelcome measures for repressing this discourtesy that I succeeded in silencing certain coffee-house brawlers, in my presence at least.

Amongst those of my countrymen whom the distractions of Ireland, as well as a declining state of health, drove to England, was Mr. Mountgarret, whom I had formerly met at Harrowgate, nearly three years before. I was pained to see such an alteration for the worse in his looks; yet he was as cheerful and communicative as ever. Having been at Clifton several weeks, he could give me no further information on Irish events than the newspapers afforded; but his company and conversation were a happy relief to the dulness of my coffee-house acquaintances.

In the intimacy which this fresh meeting had

created I was let into the secret of an event which made some noise in town a couple of years before, and of which I had heard so many versions, but none of the real facts.

Notwithstanding that the person of Mr. Mountgarret had been for some years impaired by a delicate state of health, he was, as I could perceive on my short visit to Harrowgate in 1795, a great favorite amongst the dowagers who annually resort to these baths of Hygeia: his manners were particularly fascinating; his conversational powers of the first order; and his attentions to the gentle sex unremitting. With these pretensions to notice, he made a conquest of no ordinary value. A certain lady, whose name must be held sacred, (the widow of a fortunate and distinguished officer of high naval rank,) had enjoyed his society for two successive seasons at Harrowgate. She was of that period of life "*when the passions wait upon the judgment:*" a woman of splendid fortune, unincumbered—uncontrolled! amiable without effort—generous without ostentation, and beloved by all who had the happiness of her acquaintance.

On the breaking up of the Harrowgate season

two years before, this lady took an opportunity of intimating to Mr. Mountgarret that she viewed him with more tender feelings than those of mere friendship, and had discovered so much to admire and respect in his character and manners, that she unreservedly offered to him her hand and fortune! But, as fate would have it, this brilliant boon, which chance threw in his way, was of necessity declined—he was already married! Some years before he had formed a secret matrimonial engagement with a young and virtuous female, beneath him in rank; a connexion which he was compelled to conceal from the knowledge of his only dependence, a wealthy uncle; and although this marriage was contracted under circumstances which would legally have rendered it invalid, his feelings of honor and morality were too powerful to tempt him for a moment to abandon the path of duty: he had also a lovely young family, on whom his heart doated. It was a pity that during the two seasons of unrestrained intercourse with the lady alluded to he had not made some allusions to his domestic affairs, as he had too much sense and penetration to be

blind to that growing partiality which was apparent to every other member of their society: but I fear it is the besetting sin of my countrymen to be the slaves of the most inordinate vanity, and a desire to win the affections of every woman who appears favorable to them. Whatever were the fascinations by which he retained the lady's friendship while gratefully declining her hand, certain it is his refusal did not lose him one particle of her generous favor. She insisted on making some provision for that family, which he candidly acknowledged were dependent on his professional exertions at the bar: but this his pride, and a sense of grateful regard beyond all selfish considerations, compelled him to refuse. But, on taking his leave of that estimable woman, what does the reader imagine was his request? He entreated permission to place an only brother, who had lately entered the army, under the fostering protection of one from whose powerful influence he might hope to obtain that advancement in life which his humble fortune, if left to his own efforts, might never reach! What favor could she refuse to one so much esteemed? The

parties separated: the younger brother, advanced by the prudent senior to the rank of lieutenant by purchase, appeared in the course of the winter in London, with full credentials to the lady's favor. "HE CAME—HE SAW—HE CONQUERED!"—in less than six months he was a captain; and shortly after became the husband of his patroness, with six thousand a-year! Thus far my friend's history.

Much to young Mountgarret's credit, he proved a most exemplary partner, never having caused the generous woman a moment's sorrow, or repentance of her choice during nearly twenty years. When in the wane of life, she met with that affliction which no earthly consolation could mitigate; her good and gallant husband fell in his forty-third year on the field of Waterloo, while bravely charging the enemy at the head of his regiment, in which he had reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

When communicating to me at Clifton the events which gave rise to his brother's most fortunate marriage, Mr. Mountgarret afforded me the additional pleasure of hearing from him that his uncle, a celebrated Newgate solicitor of Dub-

lin, or, as we should call it here, "Old Bailey lawyer," had died immensely rich a year before, leaving him an independent fortune, far beyond his hopes, and equal to all his wishes.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Four years had lapsed in absence, wherein his steps had ranged
'Mid many a far and foreign scene, but his heart was unestranged.

A SUBJECT of deeper interest now absorbed my entire attention. Amongst the arrivals at Clifton within the last month, my friend mentioned that of a young widow, whose person he described as of surpassing loveliness; but whose voluntary seclusion from all society gave rise to a thousand conjectures. Her age, he considered, could not exceed one or two-and-twenty years, and her circumstances, judging from appearances, were affluent. On her arrival she was accompanied by a gentleman, whom the servants called the doctor; but neither his name nor that of the lady's transpired.

After a fortnight's residence in a retired house in the neighbourhood of the Wells the doctor disappeared, leaving the two maid-servants, who had come from Ireland with the lady, in attendance upon her. After an absence of ten days, the gentleman returned, and in the course of the following week he removed his mysterious charge, whose kindness and liberality had gained her the blessing of the poor of the neighbourhood. The party took the road for Wales; but whether for north, or south, town, or village, no person could tell; although, as may be supposed, curiosity and conjecture were not idle on the subject.

An Irishman's description of beauty is at all times a glowing picture; so that I did not so much attend to that part of his information as to the minute portrait he drew of the doctor, whom he had frequently seen, and whose every feature, his gait, habit, and gesture, as described by my friend, recalled to my mind Surgeon Splint, my Somerston Esculapius. But who could be his interesting charge? who, but the lovely—the ever dear Maria?—and in widow's-weeds! The tumult which this information excited in my whole frame did not escape my observant friend's

keen observation; so that I made no scruple of pouring into his friendly ear the secret of my long-cherished, but still hopeless passion. But what clue had I to discover the fair recluse's place of retreat; and what excuse to break in on its sanctity if known? Mountgarret was not a man of doubts or difficulties: the first he despised, and all through life had triumphed over the latter. The painfully evident decay of his bodily powers apparently added to, rather than diminished, the vigor of his ardent mind; and, when taking his leave of me that day, he expressed his confidence in being able to ascertain for me in the course of a few days the retreat of the mysterious party.

My agitation could not escape the eye of my ever-watchful hostess, and I was fain to invent a tale of some intelligence received of my family, to lull her too ardent curiosity, and her suspicions that I meditated a speedy retreat. I was thus led into a labyrinth of falsehood, which brought its usual mortifications, occasional detection, and eventual disgrace; but hers was not the heart to the generosity of which an appeal might be made, no sentiment of refined love

could ever find a resting-place there. The necessity of carrying on a system of deception, which my soul abhorred, was unhappily imposed; but it did not escape my observation that all those attentions and little acts of kindness, which I had long been in the habit of receiving from my hostess, were but sparingly rendered, and always with a degree of distrust and coldness, which could not be mistaken. How ardently did I long for the summons to attend my friend! I felt a guilty reluctance to turn my horse's head towards Bristol, unaccompanied by my hostess, and her really hospitable old spouse; but my impatience admitting of no further delay, I hurried off on the third morning, hastened to my friend's lodgings, and met—disappointment! No certain tidings could be gained of the party beyond their passage of the Severn, and their proceeding towards Swansea; but whether with the intention of crossing from thence to North Devon, or remaining in the principality, the ferrymen were doubtful: their conjectures as to the first were grounded on the particular inquiries made by the doctor as to the mode of passing over to Ilfracomb; and if it required

any other mark to fix the identity of that personage beyond my friend's description of him, it was to be found in the boatmen's statements, that the doctor was extremely inquisitive as to the resources of the surrounding country in rivers, lakes, and streams; and what description of fly was the most *taking*. Even this confirmation, as it appeared to me, of the identity of at least one of the party, gave a momentary rise to the barometer of my spirits, which communicating itself to my outward man, rendered me for that day more amiable in the eyes of my half-doubting hostess. I had invited, by the particular desire of the lady and gentleman, my Irish friend to pass the next day at their house; and, according to old Launcelot's express orders, he was to "*bring his night-cap wi' him.*" The presence of my countryman made the next day pass off most pleasantly to all parties; when, taking his leave of me, he insisted on my giving him my company for the entire of next day at Clifton.

Affecting much indifference for the pleasure of my visit, I was suffered to depart without a frown, or a lecture, and set off after breakfast, intending to take Mrs. Pudish's in my route for

the chance of picking up a letter, or newspaper; but there were neither for me: however, the garrulous post-mistress embraced the happy moment of leisure to tell me all about my dark beauty, (as she sarcastically called her,) and her aged spouse.

Making a virtue of that necessity which I saw was unavoidable, I sat down, and lent an impatient ear to the old lady, who commenced her story by an observation which, had she duly weighed and considered, ought to have kept her silent.

"It is no affair of MINE to be sure, Sir, but I thought I would *just* tell you something about the extraordinary match between Patty Goodman and her old uncle Launcelot." Pausing for breath, and my thanks, which I declined offering, the dame proceeded:

"Yet it *is* a hard thing, after all, to be married to an old man; is it not, Sir?"

"Sometimes," I answered.

"Sometimes! always; morning, noon, and night. Well, as I was saying, it *was* an odd match, for Mrs. Sinnot is to the full forty, if not more, years younger than old Launcelot, and was

reared under his roof from her childhood; and although her mother was his first wife's sister, and his *own* cousin, the people *do* say—but there 's no stopping some tongues; that 's neither here nor there. After his wife's death Patty's mother became his housekeeper: he was not then quite the rich man he is now; but he was always well to do, and a racketty kind of old fellow; and if every one had his own; he would have a pretty progeny about him! but *I* am not censorious; I only repeat what my neighbours, who know him better, say:—but, Sir, as I was telling you, after Patty's aunt died her mother became his housekeeper, and little Patty was brought into the house. Her father had been a seafaring man, and after her third year was never heard of in this part of the country: the poor mother was put to all kinds of drudgery, and, after a faithful servitude of many years, she died when little Patty was only sixteen years of age. The old man was going close upon sixty; had been very prosperous in the world; sold his farm and mills in Wiltshire, and purchased the estate on which he now resides.

"Young Patty was still considered as no better

than an upper servant, when all at once the old gentleman dressed her out in finery, took her constantly in the chaise with him visiting, and after a year had elapsed, to the astonishment of the neighbourhood, he married her! Not a soul in the parish darkened their door for years, until Parson Jennings set the example, bringing his wife and children to visit them with great form; when all the neighbouring families shortly after paid them the same compliment. Poor Mr. Jennings was under great distress at the time, and old Launcelot, who *has* a generous heart, was kind to him and his family; since then they go on as you see."

Here ended Mrs. Pudish's scandalous narrative. The story was certainly a strange, but I fear by no means an uncommon one. It is quite a mistake to attribute superior virtue, innocence, and simplicity of taste, to the rural population of Great Britain: every day, every hour, serves to destroy innocence and delicacy of feeling, inflame the passions, and demoralise the heart. The young girl of tender age is regaled with all the mysteries of low traffic and imposition; and she hears that Tom the carter, or John the ploughboy, has been *had up* before the justice! "What for,

father?" asks the girl.—"*For ha'ang gotten a wanch wi' child,*" replies the heartless, brainless sire. The system of increase and multiply is ever in operation, and familiarises the mind of the country-bred girl to matters to which she ought to be a stranger. The town-bred girl would blush at country conversation: nor does it need a stronger confirmation of my argument, that indelicacy leads to crime, than the appalling fact, that of the HUNDRED THOUSAND UNFORTUNATES which, at the lowest calculation, disgrace our metropolis, more than three-fourths are from the COUNTRY—thanks to poor laws, bastardy bills, and other premiums to robbery and infanticide! I took my leave of the post-mistress without indulging her by a single censure on poor Patty, or one syllable of reproach upon the old man, from both of whom I had received the kindest civilities: whatever were my opinions, gratitude kept me silent—a feeling of delicacy which, I fancy, considerably lessened me in the good graces of Mrs. Pudish.

The countenance of Mountgarret, on our meeting, seemed to dilate with unusual importance; and when seizing my hand, he said, "My boy,

didn't I tell you I'd hold on the scent till I fairly ran down the game?"—"Well, well," I anxiously cried.—"It *is* well, as far as it goes," replied he. "It *is* Mrs. Temple! it *is* Doctor Sprint! it is your angel herself!!" More was unnecessary; I was ready to fall down and worship him.

"I now know where to direct your steps," continued my worthy countryman; "I can bring you to your treasure. But are you quite sure of a reception equal to your hopes and wishes?" inquired my friend, with graver looks.

That was a puzzler; but I answered with much of my country's, and all my *personal*, vanity in the affirmative.

"Well, then," said Mountgarret, "the party are fairly in cover at a beautiful, but most retired cottage, a few miles to the westward of Cardiff, on the banks of the river, in a fine country, surrounded by every object that can inspire and cherish romantic feelings; thither we must bend our steps, but proceed cautiously. First, let me ask you how you became acquainted with this charming widow."

After satisfying his curiosity in that respect, I was somewhat discouraged by the coolness with

which he heard me, and sadly disconcerted at his observation.

"Perhaps, my friend, you are by this time forgotten: however, if you are determined to make the attempt, no situation can be more propitious to your views. Now, may I ask you, without being impertinent, how you stand in fortune's book? I believe, if I recollect right, there are six or seven of you, boys and girls?"

When I replied, "Little more than SIXTY pounds a year, besides my pay," he smilingly observed,—

"Something of the least, Master Oliver; but by your account the lady ought to have a sufficiency for both: but we shall see how that matter stands in due time. You must ask a week's leave of absence from your host and hostess, and we can take a short excursion to Cardiff, where we shall no doubt obtain all the information we require for our guidance in after proceedings; from thence you can commence your approaches; but, like a prudent general, you must first reconnoitre the place."

It was no easy task to take the leave my friend proposed; but I felt there was no time to be lost.

Mountgarret was about to return to Dublin by way of North Wales, in a week or ten days, when I should lose his valuable advice, and equally valuable aid. I therefore, on my return home, when mentioning my friend's wish, limited my absence to four days; and, as I had apparently made up my mind to go, whether agreeable or otherwise, no opposition could consistently have been offered. But I had a task of dissimulation to perform when trying to evade the close-put questions of my inquisitive hostess, to whom I never for a moment relaxed in those personal attentions, so grateful to the sex: indeed I redoubled these assiduities, as it struck me as possible that she might have imagined the loquacious Mrs. Pudish had told me more of her history than she was desirous I should know. If such really were her thoughts, she must have been gratified that any communications, intended to act to her disadvantage on my mind, produced quite the contrary effect.

On embarking at Bristol, in a small smack for Cardiff, with my friend, my mind was absolutely bewildered in a chaos of hopes and fears. My "*amour propre*," (of which it must be seen I possessed, at that period, no small share,) carried

the point against my better judgment, and I repeated with Romeo,

> Bear me but to her,—then fail me if you can!

We reached our destination after some hours' pleasant sail, and, equipped with fishing-rods, took up our quarters at the BUTE ARMS, a comfortable cleanly inn, deficient in only one thing to render it a fashionable place of rest—extravagant charges. Our host, Mr. Morgan, was so much out of the fashion as to feed us like aldermen for three shillings and sixpence per day each! and his wines, old and unadulterated, were reasonable in proportion:—thus much for South Wales thirty years ago!

The next day we made arrangements for our piscatorial amusements: my friend was no great fly-thrower, and my exploits at the but of a rod were confined to the catching of the small fry, with which Dublin harbour abounds in summer, in my days of boyhood. We prudently engaged a disciple of the Waltonian school to be our guide and instructor, hoping to gain from him, who was the every day attendant on strangers, some account of our angling doctor: nor were we mis-

taken in our man. As he led us to a favorite part of the river, where, with the unsportsman-like *baited* hook, I murdered my speckled prey, while my friend, in vain, threw his whistling line without success or even a nibble, honest Taffy amused us with his description of various amateurs on whom he had lately been in attendance; but, (little conscious of the interest he excited by his tale,) he dwelt in terms of admiration on the skill of an Irish gentleman lately arrived in that neighbourhood, who, scorning all local aid, proved himself the first of anglers: indeed, the Welshman was quite enthusiastic in his praise, declaring that not a man in the country could make any approach to the Hibernian's skill in the havoc of salmon, sewen, or trout. Not for a moment doubting but he meant our friend the doctor, we anxiously inquired when we might expect him to make his appearance on the banks of the stream; but were much chagrined to learn from Taffy that the first hour of grey morning, or the last of the waning eve, were his times for enjoying the sport of the river.

On receiving this information we soon packed our rods, and hastened towards our quarters to

devise some means of obtaining an interview with the doctor. The cottage in which the lovely Maria had taken up her residence was between three and four miles from Cardiff, not on the exact high-road to Caerleon, but a small distance from that thoroughfare. Impatient of delay, I wrote a few lines to the doctor, stating that having by accident heard that he was in that part of the country, in charge of a lady, to whose family I owed so many obligations, I begged permission to be allowed to pay my respects to Mrs. Temple and himself, if my visit would not be deemed an intrusion. These few lines were despatched by our attendant fisherman, who, urged to speed by the promise of reward, returned in a couple of hours with the following letter, the reading of which demolished for a moment my fancy-built fabric of delight:

Bryn Cottage—July 1798.

"My dear young friend,

"Mrs. Temple desires me to say, that she has received with inexpressible pleasure the proof of your existence and safety, which your welcome note afforded us, and to her's I may with sincerity add

my congratulations also. Many unfavorable reports reached your friends in the county of Meath, which your silence tended to confirm. Deplorable changes have of late taken place in that family, by all of whom you were so kindly regarded, and the effects on Mrs. T. Temple's health and spirits have been so severe as to induce her to decline all society. But believe me, as regards *you*, this resolution would have been broken through, had I not, on observing the extreme agitation which the reading of your note caused my amiable patient, insisted on her avoiding a meeting just now with one, whose presence would revive the recollection of days of joy and happiness, now alas! for ever fled.

"You may be angry with me if you please, but I must try to propitiate your displeasure for this disappointment by a visit, which I shall make to your inn this evening. I shall have to tell you a tale of sorrow! Suffice it now to prepare you for it, by informing you that our worthy friend, whom we all so much loved, Mr. Temple, is no more! he survived his son but a few months, and at last fell the victim of his loyalty. I shall start to see you before the cool of the evening: until

we meet, accept those assurances, which my tongue and hand shall repeat, of the warm regard of your old friend and physician,

"SAMUEL SPLINT."

After reading this epistle once or twice in silence, I handed it over to my friend, blushing to my eyes with mortification and shame at my ill success! Having perused it with that calmness of judgment which I did not possess, he carefully folded it up, and, when replacing it in my hand, to console me, exclaimed "*Good!* this is all as it should be." I really could not see any thing so very encouraging in the doctor's letter; but I waited for his coming to clear up my doubts, fidgeting on my chair, and running every minute to the window. At length, after an apology to my friend, I entreated his leave to go a short portion of the road to meet the doctor: he smiled at my impatience, and kindly pressed me to go without ceremony. Having ascertained the route which our visitor must necessarily take, I hurried onwards, and had proceeded a full mile ere I saw his well-built figure approach me. Three years and more had made some difference in his face

and person; the latter had grown more portly, and, as we closed, I thought his brow appeared heavy and thoughtful; the alteration in me was of course more striking. I had advanced an inch towards heaven in *altitude*, and my face become more elongated; my features, I fancy, were by no means improved; so that I had actually fronted him before he recognised in me the slender boy of 1794. His greetings and congratulations on my safe return, and my healthful appearance, were as warm as they were sincere. I trembled as I ventured to name Mrs. Tom Temple, and found, in his answer to my inquiries after her health, little to relieve my painful anxiety. "Poor dear creature!" said he, "her frame is much shaken, and her nerves so shattered, that nothing but her sweet and amiable disposition could have sustained and preserved her!—How long have you been in England?" inquired the doctor. On my answering SIX MONTHS, I fancied I could read reproach upon his brow, and I could not dare to explain to him the precise feeling of delicacy which prevented me from writing to any one of the Temple family. I could only excuse myself by remarking, that I conceived it probable that I might

have been forgotten, having little claim on the particular regard of Mr. Temple's family, and being only one of the many on whom his kindness and hospitality had been so constantly lavished. "There you are wrong, young gentleman," interrupted the doctor, rather reproachfully; "had you been one of the family, the whole of it, and particularly the excellent man who was the head of it, could not have felt a stronger interest in you; for when your name appeared in the gazette amongst the list of wounded, a year and a half ago, a general sympathy prevailed, and a deep anxiety for your recovery, of which we all entertained hopes, from seeing your promotion shortly afterwards announced; but sinister reports reached us of your having been attacked with the yellow fever, and to the sweeping mortality which then prevailed in the islands, your Irish friends feared you had fallen a victim."

The sum of my medical friend's story was, that Mr. Thomas Temple, having lingered on from year to year in a hopeless malady, died of utter inanition the preceding winter; his exemplary but unfortunate wife discharging, with sorrowing patience, her sad task of duty to the

last moment of his wretched life, at the sacrifice of her own health, her spirits, and much of that exquisite beauty which all admired, in this mournful office.

"The mind of the old gentleman," continued the doctor, "was drawn from the contemplation of his domestic sorrows by the alarming state of the country. He was, you know, the captain of the Templemore yeomanry. Early in the present year our county was in such a disturbed state as to be placed under martial law. All the socialities of life were broken up; the females of all the respectable families fled to the metropolis for refuge; we, in fact, slept on our arms. The horrors of war burst suddenly upon the land; the highest and the humblest homes felt its dreadful scourge. The once peaceful town-hall of Templemore was converted into a barrack. That mansion, in which kindness and hospitality reigned, now divested of all those ornaments which adorned it in our days of peace and security, became the head-quarters of the general of the district and his staff; and our once rich, but now neglected fields, are the common property of the military of all arms.

"Our brave and loyal captain, having seen his darling Maria set off for Dublin under my care, with an escort of dragoons, turned his horse's head from his late happy home—never to return! He fell while leading on his troop to the rescue of General Archbold from a party of rebels, into whose ambuscade he had fallen, and against whose breast was raised the pike which the next moment pierced the heart of our loved and respected commander. The general, with those noble feelings which gratitude for his delivery inspired, rallied the now broken troop, and after a murderous conflict, succeeded in bearing off the mangled body of his brave deliverer for honorable interment. Thus perished that brave old man, who, at the age of sixty-four, showed in the hour of battle all the fire and courage of youth.

"His untimely death, while it threw a damp over the spirits of his late comrades in arms, still more strongly inflamed their passions against the unfortunate rebels, none of whom, in their future contests with the yeomanry, ever found a moment's favor or mercy!

"The only remaining child, the Baroness D'Alton, is in Germany with her husband, who, having

succeeded to his uncle's honors, accepted a command in the Austrian army two years since. The late melancholy events will no doubt bring her to Ireland when a secure passage can be obtained; until then the property of the family remains unsettled. Mrs. Temple's fortune was secured to her by marriage settlement; but it was supposed that, on the death of her late husband, the old gentleman made a considerable addition to that sum: be that as it may, every other consideration but that of self-preservation yields to the dreadful circumstances in which our unhappy country is at present plunged.

"My lovely and interesting charge placed herself under my care, and I hastened to remove her from the scene of so much affliction. I had long perceived in her a tendency to pulmonary consumption. My fears, I grieve to say, have of late greatly increased; and, as I owe much to the kindness and friendship of that excellent family, I shall continue my humble services so long as they can be made useful. Ah! my young friend," concluded the doctor, with much true feeling of speech and countenance, "her life has been hitherto one of sadness and disappointment;—

may Heaven grant it may conclude more happily!" Overpowered by the conflict of my feelings, I could only exclaim, "Amen! amen!—may Heaven protect that angelic woman!"

The fervency with which this sentence was pronounced had in it a something beyond friendship, pity, or respect. The doctor was not a man to suffer such an expression of ardent feeling to pass unobserved. After darting on my face a look of penetrating inquiry, which pierced into my very soul, he stopped, caught me by the arm, and with his own characteristic bluntness said, "You love her then!—would you marry her?" I stood for a moment confused at the abruptness of the question; but pulling off my hat, (in I dare say a very theatrical manner, but on that occasion with all sincerity of heart,) I exclaimed, "Did it please Heaven to exalt me to a throne, the God whose name I presume to invoke knows that I should esteem myself blessed in sharing it with her!"

After a long pause, during which the features of the doctor underwent the most rapid alternation of expression, he looked on me with a feeling in which kindness and pity were blended; and, pressing my hand as he dropped it, hurried for-

ward, merely saying, "Well, well!—at a future time this may be talked of;" while with a deep sigh, which even his struggle for affected indifference could not suppress, he added, "It may be too late!"

We were now near the Bute Arms: whatever were the inward workings in the minds of both, each put on an air of tranquillity, as I introduced the doctor to my friend, who accepted the proffered hand held out to him with that generous confidence which the gentleman of Ireland feels in himself. The scarcely tasted bottle of excellent port, which graced the board, was soon sent round, and after a few revolutions my friends became as social as might be expected from men of liberal feelings and enlightened minds.

The doctor had nothing to communicate in the way of news which to my friend Mountgarret would not have appeared stale, and he had his own reasons for avoiding any particular allusion to the events of their common country; but the ruling passion in his guileless nature soon broke forth by observing, that the messenger by whom my note had been conveyed to him was one of the best anglers in the country. "But," said the doctor,

"they are still but butchers; they kill all their fish by main force, knowing nothing of the science of the delightful sport. Not many days since, just as morning dawned, I hooked a salmon, which, from its vigorous pull, I calculated could not be less than an eight or ten pounder! He ran me to the last fathom of my line, and then reversing his course, rushed on me up the stream with the rapidity of lightning; but I was reeled up and ready: again he plunged down the current—I followed him knee-deep in the stream, playing him to almost the last inch of my line, following his course down the river, until, up to my hips, I stumbled on a shelving rock, on which I took my stand." The enthusiastic doctor, at this part of his story, shoved back his chair, and stealing one foot on its seat, which was gently followed by the other, he held his hand as if grasping the rod, then rolling his eyes, "in a fine frenzy," over the table, as if the river ran before him, continued—"The fish, still strong, gave me as much as I could do to hold him in play; at length he made one desperate plunge, which gave me a full sight of his enormous size;—'twas conquer or die.' I

scrambled to the highest part of the slippery rock," said the doctor, clambering on the table with an anxiety of eye, as if the fish still plunged and floundered before it, "and then, tipping him the *but*, at last fairly exhausted him—his shining, silvery belly showed itself on the surface of the stream. I landed him in safety, Sirs, and, by the virtue of my oath! he was thirteen pounds, if an ounce, and killed with a single gut!" The description of this important conquest concluded, the doctor very cautiously dismounted from the table and the chair, carefully wiping his footstep from the former; and when seated, cried in an ecstasy, "to kill two such fish in a man's life would repay him for an age of toil!"

The doctor himself not only for the moment forgot the Irish rebellion, the loss of his friend, and the amiable Maria, but communicating a portion of his enthusiasm to his hearers, cheated us of all other thoughts but his encounter with the monarch of the stream.

My friend the barrister took upon himself to explain how I became acquainted with the circumstance of Mrs. Temple's and his own appearance at

Clifton, and of those measures which that knowledge induced me, under his counsel, to adopt to obtain if possible an interview with him.

"I am sure I ought to feel infinitely proud of your young friend taking so much trouble to shake hands with a poor Irish apothecary," said he archly: I blushed to the tip of my ears. "However, he has not sought me in vain. I have prescribed *patience!*"

"And I, *perseverance!*" boldly added my friend of the courts, with a significant wink at the doctor.

Perceiving that these gentlemen seemed to understand each other, I remained silent until the moment for separation arrived, when my medical friend, in a firm and energetic manner, urged my return to Bristol, without any attempt to see the object of my fondest wishes. I was half jealous! Can he, thought I, have any schemes of his own in view? It was a suspicion unworthy of both, and was instantly dismissed from my mind. To my question—"May I not write to her?" he replied, "Yes, through me."—"Well! be it so," said I, half nettled at the restriction, and I took his hand in an agony of disappointment and doubt. We

hastened back to our respective homes, and I was thus enabled to fulfil my promise of return on the fourth day.

A letter had been delivered for me from my regiment, inclosing the circular at that period issued, calling all officers to their duty, under pain of dismissal for any unaccounted-for absence or delay.

The awful words "WEST INDIES" were, in those days, the bug-bear; and my reply, that I had not yet quite recovered from the effects of two years' service in that "*dreadful climate!*" to undertake regimental duty, was admitted as an excuse for my non-appearance at the head-quarters; but I added, in my letter to the commanding-officer, that in the event of the regiment being ordered for service in Ireland, I should join within three days of receiving such notice. This partly reconciled me to the subterfuge I was led to adopt, but of which I felt inwardly ashamed and mortified; but a man in love, in debt, or in liquor, frequently says and does many things which, on reflection, cause internal upbraidings.

The head-quarters of the ——land fencibles were then established at Wigan; neither its

merical strength nor state of discipline rendered it likely to be called into employment for at least three months; and what might not be effected in half that time by perseverance in my love pursuit? I too soon lost the advantage of my worthy countryman's advice; he had taken his departure, after tendering to me his best wishes for my success and happiness. An effort became necessary to retire from the Sinnot family without the imputation of caprice and ingratitude. There was no excuse for my departure more powerful than the necessity for joining my regiment; and to afford some idea of this necessity, as well as to prepare the person whom I considered most interested in the movement for the event, I left my official letter open in the drawer of my dressing-table, knowing that it would not long escape female curiosity. Instead therefore of having to break the matter to the parties myself, my arrangements for marching were drawn from me by questions, which the sight of the said letter alone could have suggested.

Before the expiration of a third month's residence I was in a state of preparation,—all ready to depart, and still on the best possible terms

with all the household. When the hour of separation arrived, it passed off without any struggle of feelings on any side, save and except old Launcelot, who seemed really affected at losing my company, and whose kind treatment of, and hospitality to me to the last moment, I had every reason to feel grateful for. I took the route to Bath, from whence I wrote to the doctor announcing my removal, and intention of joining my regiment in a few weeks in Lancashire; previously to which I should pass a short time at Cheltenham, where any communication he might have the kind consideration to make would meet me.

To that town (not as now, a little world of brick and mortar and Roman cement,) I accordingly repaired; and in the gay society, chiefly Irish, which I there met, passed a fortnight of pleasure, intermixed however with deep anxiety for the doctor's dispatch. But, Oh! how shall I describe my ecstasies when that welcome letter did touch my trembling hand, and I read the charming widow's permission—nay, her invitation to me, to visit her at her new residence, Hafod Cottage, near Malvern, whither they had removed

from Wales in consequence of some late tremendous flood, which nearly overflowed their Welsh cottage, and which rendered an immediate removal necessary. I blessed the accident that brought them so near to me, and; with my characteristic impatience, was about setting off that very day; however, I had the good sense to conquer it, and took the early portion of the following day to proceed on my journey. I set out with a light and happy heart for Malvern, which I reached late in the afternoon. At that period it was little better than an unpretending village; but, as the residence of the object of my adoration, it appeared to me a Paradise. With an unsteady step I approached the secluded but beautiful cottage, to which the gentle Maria had withdrawn from all the gaieties of the busy world. It was the sweet and silent hour of eve, just as the sun in radiant smiles bids us a long and lingering farewell. My approach was not unobserved; the watchful doctor ran to meet and detain me in the porch, while his amiable patient endeavoured to collect her powers of nerve into a state of composure.

At length she appeared!—Words are inade-

quate to express the various feelings her presence excited in my throbbing breast; but love—ardent, devoted love, predominated. As I pressed her cold and tremulous hand in mine, a thrill of agony shot through my whole frame; while the sight of her sunken eye, her pallid cheek, and struggling effort to bestow on me the smile of welcome, almost struck me dumb with grief. I gazed in silence. Gracious Heaven! how altered! yet still how beautiful!—But it was the beauty of an angel, not of a being of our earth!

Our first emotions having subsided into something like a calm, I endeavoured to draw her attention from the painful retrospection of her sorrows by amusing her and the doctor with a sketch of my adventures since we last had met.

She gave me for my pains a world of sighs.

Time passed on, and it was already after ten (an hour beyond her usual time for retiring for the night) before I took my leave, after a kind intimation that I should use that house as my home during the hours of day.

It was twelve the next morning ere I was again blessed with a sight of the lovely recluse. The

doctor informed me that the effort she had made to receive me was followed by a night of suffering; "so extreme," added he, "that I had some thoughts of sending to you, to request you would not repeat your visit until after one day's interval. However," continued my friend, (significantly) "you were desired to consider this as *your home*:—but be discreet; you see that the hand of sickness, as well as that of sorrow, lies heavily on that angelic woman:—prove your attachment—restrain every selfish wish; let us if possible restore her, and all—all may yet be well!"

There was candour and kindness in the advice, and I expressed the gratitude of a warm and deeply affected heart for this fresh proof of friendly regard. When Maria at length appeared, refreshed by several hours' unbroken sleep, I thought she looked much better than on the preceding evening; but the insidious crimson spot which occasionally tinged her delicate cheek in hectic flashes, spoke daggers to my heart. Day by day, for a week, I watched her sweet and pensive countenance, and flattered myself that I saw a daily amendment in it. This raised my

hopes; but as the hour for that parting arrived—which I feared might be for ever!—they again sunk to the depth of despair: a declaration of my wishes, even though we might never again meet, became indispensable to my existence. The doctor's well-meant injunctions—my own delicacy and forbearance—that feeling of self-denial which would have led me to sacrifice my life and happiness for her tranquillity—all gave way, and bent before the overwhelming passion of my heart; and on that night which was to tear me, as I thought, for ever from her loved presence, she heard with a silent tear the profession of my ardent love, and accepted the devotion of a heart wholly her own! There are some moments of our existence so sweet, as to repay the mind of sensibility for all its past sufferings, and that to me was the most blissful one, when the faint, yet dulcet "YES," fell in a gentle whisper from her burning lip:—to part from her became an impossibility!

I spared her the pain of explanation with the doctor, by taking on myself that delicate office. He heard me with a look "more of sorrow than

of anger." I could perceive that my intelligence less surprised than *afflicted* him! He, however, made no remark but this—"*Deserve her!*"

I retired for the night, and next morning we all met in the consciousness that each understood the other, and all was harmony and confidence. The doctor accompanied me to Worcester, where some important matters were to be arranged, the execution of which occupied us two days, which to me seemed as many centuries; after which, we returned to the cottage. Reflection had apparently reconciled my dear betrothed to the step she was about to take; her looks were improved, her air composed and cheerful; the doctor's hopes seemed to revive, and our hours and days passed on in the anticipations of future bliss. At the end of another fortnight, the nuptial benediction bestowed, I pressed to the fondest and most faithful of hearts—THE VIRGIN WIDOW!

"Now for the present, gentle reader, and
Still gentler purchaser, the scribe—that's I—
Must for the present shake you by the hand,
And say your humble servant, and good bye.

We meet again, if we should understand
Each other; and, if not, I shall not try
Your patience further, than by this light sample—
'Twere well if others followed my example."

THE END.

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